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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Fischer	(Germany)
<i>Members:</i>	Angola	Mr. Chikoti
	Bulgaria	Mr. Passy
	Cameroon	Mr. Ngoubeyou
	Chile	Mrs. Alvear Valenzuela
	China	Mr. Tang Jiaxuan
	France	Mr. Galouzeau de Villepin
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Mexico	Mr. Derbez
	Pakistan	Mr. Kasuri
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ivanov
	Spain	Ms. Palacio Vallelersundi
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Straw
	United States of America	Mr. Powell

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.



The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Iraq in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, at this meeting. I also welcome the presence of Mr. Hans Blix, Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission, and Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Members of the Council who wish to address questions to Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei are invited to do so at the luncheon to be held following the adjournment of this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear a presentation by the United States. In order for us to work within our timetable, participants are urged to speak for no longer than seven minutes.

I call on His Excellency Mr. Colin Powell, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mr. Powell (United States of America): I would like to begin by expressing my thanks for the special effort that each of you made to be here today. This is an important day for us all as we review the situation with respect to Iraq and its disarmament obligations under Security Council resolution 1441 (2002).

Last 8 November, the Council passed resolution 1441 (2002) by a unanimous vote. The purpose of that

resolution was to disarm Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction. Iraq had already been found guilty of material breach of its obligations stretching back over 16 previous resolutions and 12 years. Resolution 1441 (2002) was not dealing with an innocent party, but with a regime that the Council had repeatedly convicted over the years. Resolution 1441 (2002) gave Iraq one last chance to come into compliance or to face serious consequences. No Council member present and voting on that day had any illusions about the nature and intent of the resolution or about what "serious consequences" meant if Iraq did not comply.

To assist in its disarmament, we called on Iraq to cooperate with returning inspectors from the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We laid down tough standards for Iraq to meet, to allow the inspectors to do their job. The Council placed the burden on Iraq to comply and disarm, and not on the inspectors to find that which Iraq has gone out of its way to conceal for so long. Inspectors are inspectors; they are not detectives.

I asked for this meeting today for two purposes: first, to support the core assessments made by Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei. As Mr. Blix reported to the Council on 27 January,

"... Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance — not even today — of the disarmament that was demanded of it". (S/PV.4692, p. 3)

And as Mr. ElBaradei reported, Iraq's declaration of 7 December

"... did not provide any new information relevant to certain questions that have been outstanding since 1998". (*ibid.*, p. 10)

My second purpose today is to provide you with additional information and to share with you what the United States knows about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction as well Iraq's involvement in terrorism, which is also the subject of resolution 1441 (2002) and other, earlier, resolutions. I might add, at this point, that we are providing all the relevant information we can to the inspections teams, for them to do their work.

The material I will present to you comes from a variety of sources. Some are United States sources and some are those of other countries. Some of the sources

are technical, such as intercepted telephone conversations and photos taken by satellites. Other sources are people who have risked their lives to let the world know what Saddam Hussain is really up to. I cannot tell you everything that we know. But what I can share with you, when combined with what all of us have learned over the years, is deeply troubling. What you will see is an accumulation of facts and disturbing patterns of behaviour. The facts and Iraq's behaviour demonstrate that Saddam Hussain and his regime have made no effort to disarm as required by the international community. Indeed, the facts and Iraq's behaviour show that Saddam Hussain and his regime are concealing their efforts to produce more weapons of mass destruction.

Let me begin by playing a tape for you. What you are about to hear is a conversation that my Government monitored. It took place on 26 November 2002, on the day before United Nations teams resumed inspections in Iraq. The conversation involves two senior officers, a colonel and a brigadier general from Iraq's elite military unit, the Republican Guard.

An audio tape, in Arabic, was played in the Council Chamber; an English translation provided by the United States delegation was projected on screen in the Chamber.

Colonel: Peace. We just have a small question.

Brigadier General: Yeah.

Colonel: About this committee that is coming.

Brigadier General: Yeah, yeah.

Colonel: ... with Mohamed ElBaradei.

Brigadier General: Yeah. Yeah.

Colonel: Yeah.

Brigadier General: Yeah?

Colonel: We have this modified vehicle.

Brigadier General: Yeah.

Colonel: What do we say if one of them sees it?

Brigadier General: You didn't get a modified ... you don't have a modified ...

Colonel: By God, I have one.

Brigadier General: Which? From the workshop ... ?

Colonel: From the Al-Kindi Company.

Brigadier General: What?

Colonel: From Al-Kindi.

Brigadier General: Yeah, yeah. I'll come to you in the morning. I have some comments. I'm worried you all have something left.

Colonel: We evacuated everything. We don't have anything left.

Brigadier General: I will come to you tomorrow.

Colonel: OK.

Brigadier General: I have a conference at headquarters. Before I attend the conference I will come to you.

Mr. Powell (United States of America): Let me pause to review some of the key elements of the conversation you have just heard between the two officers. First, they acknowledge that our colleague, Mohamed ElBaradei is coming. They know what he is coming for and they know he is coming the next day. He is coming to look for things that are prohibited. He is expecting those gentlemen to cooperate with him and not hide things. But they are worried: "We have this modified vehicle. What do we say if one of them sees it?" What is their concern? Their concern is that it is something they should not have, something that should not be seen.

The General is incredulous: "You didn't get a modified — you don't have one of those, do you?" — "I have one." — "Which? From where?" — "From the workshop. From the Al-Kindi Company." — "What?" — "From Al-Kindi." — "I'll come to see you in the morning. I'm worried you all have something left." — "We evacuated everything. We don't have anything left."

Note what he says: — "We evacuated everything." We didn't destroy it. We didn't line it up for inspection. We didn't turn it into the inspectors. We evacuated it to make sure it was not around when the inspectors showed up. "I will come to you tomorrow."

The Al-Kindi Company: This is a company that is well known to have been involved in prohibited weapons systems activity.

Let me play another tape for you. As you will recall, the inspectors found 12 empty chemical warheads on 16 January. On 20 January, four days later, Iraq promised the inspectors it would search for more. You will now hear an officer from Republican Guard headquarters issuing an instruction to an officer in the field. Their conversation took place just last week, on 30 January.

An audio tape, in Arabic, was played in the Council Chamber; an English translation provided by the United States delegation was projected on screen in the Chamber.

Headquarters officer: Sir ...

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: There is a directive of the [Republican] Guard chief of staff at the conference today ...

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: They are inspecting the ammunition you have.

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: ... for the possibility there are forbidden ammo.

Officer in the field: Yes?

Headquarters officer: For the possibility there is by chance forbidden ammo.

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: And we sent you a message to inspect the scrap areas and the abandoned areas.

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: After you have carried out what is contained in the message ... destroy the message.

Officer in the field: Yes.

Headquarters officer: Because I don't want anyone to see this message.

Officer in the field: OK. OK.

Headquarters officer: Thanks.

Officer in the field: Goodbye.

Mr. Powell (United States of America): Let me pause again and review the elements of that message: "They are inspecting the ammunition you have," — "Yes." — "For the possibility there are forbidden ammo. For the possibility there is by chance forbidden ammo?" — "Yes." — "We sent you a message yesterday to clear out all of the areas. The scrap areas. The abandoned areas. Make sure there is nothing there".

Remember the first message: "Evacuate it." This is all part of a system of hiding things, moving things out of the way and making sure they have left nothing behind.

You go a little further into this message and you see the specific instructions from headquarters: "After you have carried out what is contained in this message, destroy the message; because I don't want anyone to see this message." — "OK. OK." Why? Why? That message would have verified to the inspectors that they have been trying to turn over things. They were looking for things, but they do not want that message seen, because they were trying to clean up the area and leave no evidence behind of the presence of weapons of mass destruction; and they can claim that nothing was there, and the inspectors can look all they want and they will find nothing.

This effort to hide things from the inspectors is not one or two isolated events. Quite the contrary, this is part and parcel of a policy of evasion and deception that goes back 12 years — a policy set at the highest levels of the Iraqi regime.

We know that Saddam Hussain has what is called "a Higher Committee for Monitoring the Inspection Teams". Think about that — Iraq has a high-level committee to monitor the inspectors who were sent in to monitor Iraq's disarmament. Not to cooperate with them, not to assist them, but to spy on them and keep them from doing their jobs.

The committee reports directly to Saddam Hussain. It is headed by Iraq's Vice President, Taha Yasin Ramadan. Its members include Saddam Hussain's son, Qusay. This Committee also includes Lieutenant-General Amir Al-Sa'di, an advisor to Saddam. In case this name isn't immediately familiar to you, General Sa'di has been the Iraqi regime's

primary point of contact for Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei. It was General Sa'di who last fall publicly pledged that Iraq was prepared to cooperate unconditionally with inspectors. Quite the contrary, Sa'di's job is not to cooperate. It is to deceive — not to disarm, but to undermine the inspectors; not to support them, but to frustrate them and to make sure they learn nothing.

We have learned a lot about the work of this special committee. We learned that, just prior to the return of inspectors last November, the regime had decided to resume what we heard called "the old game of cat-and-mouse".

For example, let me focus on the now famous declaration that Iraq submitted to this Council on 7 December. Iraq never had any intention of complying with the Council's mandate. Instead, Iraq planned to use the declaration to overwhelm us and to overwhelm the inspectors with useless information about Iraq's permitted weapons, so that we would not have time to pursue its prohibited weapons. Iraq's goal was to give us in this room, to give those of us on this Council, the false impression that the inspection process was working.

You saw the result. Mr. Blix pronounced the 12,200-page declaration rich in volume but poor in information and practically devoid of new evidence. Could any member of this Council honestly rise in defence of this false declaration?

Everything we have seen and heard indicates that, instead of cooperating actively with the inspectors to ensure the success of their mission, Saddam Hussain and his regime are busy doing all they possibly can to ensure that inspectors succeed in finding absolutely nothing.

My colleagues, every statement I make today is backed up by sources. Solid sources. These are not assertions. What we are giving you are facts and conclusions based on solid intelligence.

I will cite some examples, and these are from human sources. Orders were issued to Iraq's security organizations, as well as to Saddam Hussain's own office, to hide all correspondence with the Organization of Military Industrialization (OMI), the organization that oversees Iraq's weapons of mass destruction activities: make sure there are no documents left which would connect you to the OMI.

We know that Saddam's son Qusay ordered the removal of all prohibited weapons from Saddam's numerous palace complexes.

We know that Iraqi Government officials, members of the ruling Ba'ath party and scientists have hidden prohibited items in their homes. Other key files from military and scientific establishments have been placed in cars that are being driven around the countryside by Iraqi intelligence agents to avoid detection.

An image was projected on screen.

Thanks to intelligence provided to them, the inspectors recently found dramatic confirmation of these reports. When they searched the home of an Iraqi nuclear scientist, they uncovered roughly 2,000 pages of documents. You see them here being brought out of the home and placed in United Nations hands. Some of the material is classified and related to Iraq's nuclear programme.

Tell me, answer me: are the inspectors to search the house of every Government official, every Ba'ath party member and every scientist in the country to find the truth and to get the information they need to satisfy the demands of our Council?

Our sources tell us that in some cases, the hard drives of computers at Iraqi weapons facilities were replaced. Who took the hard drives? Where did they go? What is being hidden? Why? There is only one answer to the "why" — it is to deceive, to hide, to keep from the inspectors.

Numerous human sources tell us that the Iraqis are moving not just documents and hard drives but also weapons of mass destruction to keep them from being found by inspectors.

We know from sources that while we were here in this Council Chamber debating resolution 1441 (2002) last fall, a missile brigade outside Baghdad was dispersing rocket launchers and warheads containing biological warfare agent to various locations in western Iraq. Most of the launchers and warheads had been hidden in large groves of palm trees and were to be moved every one to four weeks to escape detection. We also have satellite photos that indicate that banned materials have recently been moved from a number of Iraqi facilities for weapons of mass destruction.

Let me say a word about satellite images before I show a couple. The photos I am about to show you are sometimes hard for the average person to interpret. Indeed, hard for me. The painstaking work of photo analysis takes experts with years and years of experience poring for hours and hours over light tables. But as I show you these images I will explain what they mean, what they indicate to our imagery specialists.

An image was projected on screen.

Let us look at this one. It is about a weapons munition facility — a facility that holds ammunition — at a place called Taji. This is one of about 65 such facilities in Iraq. We know that this one has housed chemical munitions. In fact, it is where the Iraqis recently came up with the additional four chemical weapons shells. Here you see 15 munitions bunkers in yellow and red outlines. The four that are in the red squares represent active chemical munitions bunkers.

How do I know this? How can I say this? Let me give you a closer look. Look at the image on the left.

Two images were projected on screen.

On the left is a close-up of one of the four chemical munitions bunkers. The two arrows indicate the presence of sure signs that these bunkers are storing chemical munitions. The arrow at the top that says "Security" points to a facility that is a signature item for this kind of bunker. Inside the facility are special guards and special equipment to monitor any leakage that might come out of the bunker. The truck you also see is a signature item. It is a decontamination vehicle, in case something goes wrong. This is characteristic of those four bunkers. The special security facility and the decontamination vehicle will be in the area; if not at any one or the other of them, it is moving around those four. It moves as needed, as people are working in the different bunkers.

Now look at the photo on the right. You are looking at two of those sanitized bunkers. The signature vehicles are gone, the tents are gone. It has been cleaned up. This was done on 22 December as the United Nations inspection team was arriving. You can see the inspection vehicles arriving in the lower portion of the picture on the right. The bunkers were clean when the inspectors got there. They found nothing.

This sequence of events raises the worrisome suspicion that Iraq had been tipped off to the

forthcoming inspections at Taji. As it did throughout the 1990s, Iraq today is, we know, actively using its considerable intelligence capabilities to help hide its illicit activities. From our sources, we know that the inspectors are under constant surveillance by an army of Iraqi intelligence operatives. Iraq is relentlessly attempting to tap all their communications, both voice and electronic.

I call my colleagues' attention to the fine paper that the United Kingdom distributed yesterday, which describes in exquisite detail Iraqi deception activities.

In this next example, you will see the type of concealment activity Iraq has undertaken in response to the resumption of inspections. Indeed, in November 2002, just when the inspections were about to resume, this type of activity spiked. Here are three examples.

An image was projected on screen.

At this ballistic missile site on 10 November, we saw a cargo truck preparing to move ballistic missile components.

An image was projected on screen.

At this biological weapons-related facility, on 25 November, just two days before inspections resumed, this truck caravan appeared — something we almost never see at this facility, and we monitor it carefully and regularly.

An image was projected on screen.

At this ballistic missile facility — again, two days before inspections began — five large cargo trucks appeared, along with the truck-mounted crane to move missiles.

We saw this kind of housecleaning at close to 30 sites. Days after this activity, the vehicles and the equipment that I have just highlighted disappeared and the site returned to patterns of normalcy. We do not know precisely what Iraq was moving, but the inspectors already knew about these sites, so Iraq knew that they would be coming.

We must ask ourselves: Why would Iraq suddenly move equipment of this nature before inspections if it was anxious to demonstrate what it had or did not have? Remember the first intercept, in which two Iraqis talked about the need to hide a "modified vehicle" from the inspectors? Where did Iraq take all of this equipment? Why was it not presented to the inspectors?

Iraq also has refused to permit any U-2 reconnaissance flights that would give the inspectors a better sense of what is being moved before, during and after inspections. This refusal to allow this kind of reconnaissance is in direct, specific violation of operative paragraph 7 of our resolution 1441 (2002).

Saddam Hussain and his regime are not just trying to conceal weapons; they are also trying to hide people. You know the basic facts. Iraq has not complied with its obligation to allow immediate, unimpeded, unrestricted and private access to all officials and other persons, as required by resolution 1441 (2002).

The regime allows only interviews with inspectors in the presence of an Iraqi official — a “minder.” The official Iraqi organization charged with facilitating inspections announced publicly, and announced ominously, that “nobody is ready” to leave Iraq to be interviewed.

Iraqi Vice-President Ramadan accused the inspectors of conducting espionage — a veiled threat that anyone cooperating with United Nations inspectors was committing treason.

Iraq did not meet its obligations under resolution 1441 (2002) to provide a comprehensive list of scientists associated with its weapons of mass destruction programmes. Iraq’s list was out of date and contained only about 500 names, despite the fact that the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) had earlier put together a list of about 3,500 names.

Let me just tell you what a number of human sources have told us.

Saddam Hussain has directly participated in the effort to prevent interviews. In early December, Saddam Hussain had all Iraqi scientists warned of the serious consequences that they and their families would face if they revealed any sensitive information to the inspectors. They were forced to sign documents acknowledging that divulging information is punishable by death.

Saddam Hussain also said that scientists should be told not to agree to leave Iraq. Anyone who agreed to be interviewed outside Iraq would be treated as a spy. This violates resolution 1441 (2002).

In mid-November, just before the inspectors returned, Iraqi experts were ordered to report to the

headquarters of the special security organization to receive counter-intelligence training. The training focused on evasion methods, interrogation resistance techniques, and how to mislead inspectors.

These are not assertions. These are facts, corroborated by many sources — some of them sources of the intelligence services of other countries. For example, in mid-December, weapons experts at one facility were replaced by Iraqi intelligence agents, who were to deceive inspectors about the work that was being done there.

On orders from Saddam Hussain, Iraqi officials issued a false death certificate for one scientist, and he was sent into hiding.

In the middle of January, experts at one facility that was related to weapons of mass destruction were ordered to stay home from work to avoid the inspectors. Workers from other Iraqi military facilities not engaged in illicit weapons projects were to replace the workers who had been sent home.

A dozen experts have been placed under house arrest — not in their own houses, but as a group, at one of Saddam Hussain’s “guest houses”.

It goes on and on and on.

As the examples I have just presented show, the information and intelligence we have gathered point to an active and systematic effort on the part of the Iraqi regime to keep key materials and people from the inspectors, in direct violation of resolution 1441 (2002).

The pattern is not just one of reluctant cooperation. Nor is it merely a lack of cooperation. What we see is a deliberate campaign to prevent any meaningful inspection work.

Operative paragraph 4 of resolution 1441 (2002), which we lingered over so long last fall, clearly states that “false statements or omissions” in the declaration and a “failure by Iraq at any time to comply with, and cooperate fully in the implementation of, this resolution shall constitute” — and the facts speak for themselves — “a further material breach of Iraq’s obligations”. We wrote it this way to give Iraq an early test — would they give an honest declaration, and would they early on indicate a willingness to cooperate with the inspectors? It was designed to be an early test. They failed that test.

By this standard — the standard of this operative paragraph — I believe that Iraq is now in further material breach of its obligations. I believe that this conclusion is irrefutable and undeniable. Iraq has now placed itself in danger of the serious consequences called for in resolution 1441 (2002).

This body places itself in danger of irrelevance if it allows Iraq to continue to defy its will without responding effectively and immediately.

The issue before us is not how much time we are willing to give the inspectors to be frustrated by Iraqi obstruction, but how much longer are we willing to put up with Iraq's non-compliance before we, as the Council, we, as the United Nations, say: "Enough. Enough."

The gravity of this moment is matched by the gravity of the threat that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction pose to the world.

Let me now turn to those deadly weapons programmes and describe why they are real and present dangers to the region and to the world.

First, biological weapons. We have talked frequently here about biological weapons. By way of introduction and history, I think there are just three quick points I need to make.

First, you will recall that it took UNSCOM four long and frustrating years to pry — to pry — an admission out of Iraq that it had biological weapons.

Secondly, when Iraq finally admitted having these weapons in 1995, the quantities were vast. Less than a teaspoonful of dry anthrax in an envelope shut down the United States Senate in the fall of 2001. This forced several hundred people to undergo emergency medical treatment and killed two postal workers, just from that amount — just the quantity I am indicating — that was inside an envelope.

Iraq declared 8,500 litres of anthrax, but UNSCOM estimates that Saddam Hussain could have produced 25,000 litres. If concentrated into this dry form, that amount would be enough to fill tens upon tens upon tens of thousands of teaspoons — and Saddam Hussain has not verifiably accounted for even one teaspoonful of this deadly material.

That is my third point, and it is key. The Iraqis have never accounted for all of the biological agents they admitted they had and we know they had. They

have never accounted for all the organic material used to make them. They have not accounted for many of the weapons filled with these agents, such as their R-400 bombs.

This is evidence, not conjecture. This is true. This is all well documented. Mr. Blix told the Council that Iraq has provided little evidence to verify anthrax production and no convincing evidence of its destruction. It should come as no shock, then, that since Saddam Hussain forced out the last inspectors in 1998, we have amassed much intelligence indicating that Iraq is continuing to make these weapons.

One of the most worrisome things that emerges from the thick intelligence file we have on Iraq's biological weapons is the existence of mobile production facilities used to make biological agents. Let me take you inside that intelligence file and share with you what we know from eyewitness accounts.

We have firsthand descriptions of biological weapons factories on wheels and on rails. The trucks and train cars are easily moved and are designed to evade detection by inspectors. In a matter of months, they can produce a quantity of biological poison equal to the entire amount that Iraq claimed to have produced in the years prior to the Gulf war.

Although Iraq's mobile production programme began in the mid-1990s, United Nations inspectors at the time had only vague hints of such programmes. Confirmation came later, in the year 2000. The source was an eyewitness: an Iraqi chemical engineer who supervised one of these facilities. He actually was present during biological agent production runs. He also was at the site when an accident occurred in 1998. Twelve technicians died from exposure to biological agents.

He reported that, when UNSCOM was in-country and inspecting, the biological weapons agent production always began on Thursdays at midnight because Iraq thought UNSCOM would not inspect on the Muslim holy day — Thursday night through Friday. He added that this was important because the units could not be broken down in the middle of a production run, which had to be completed by Friday evening, before the inspectors might arrive again. This defector is currently hiding in another country, with the certain knowledge that Saddam Hussain will kill him if he finds him.

His eyewitness account of these mobile production facilities has been corroborated by other sources. A second source, an Iraqi civil engineer in a position to know the details of the programme, confirmed the existence of transportable facilities moving on trailers. A third source, also in a position to know, reported in the summer of 2002 that Iraq had manufactured mobile production systems mounted on road-trailer units and on rail cars. Finally, a fourth source, an Iraqi major who defected, confirmed that Iraq has mobile biological research laboratories in addition to the production facilities I mentioned earlier.

An image was projected on screen.

We have diagrammed what our sources reported about these mobile facilities. Here you see both truck-mounted and railcar-mounted mobile factories. The descriptions our sources gave us of the technical features required by such facilities are highly detailed and extremely accurate.

An image was projected on screen.

As these drawings based on their descriptions show, we know what the fermentors look like. We know what the tanks, pumps, compressors and other parts look like. We know how they fit together. We know how they work. And we know a great deal about the platforms on which they are mounted. As shown in this diagram, these factories can be concealed easily, either by moving ordinary looking trucks and railcars along Iraq's thousands of miles of highway or track or by parking them in a garage or warehouse, or somewhere in Iraq's extensive system of underground tunnels and bunkers.

We know that Iraq has at least seven of these mobile biological agent factories. The truck-mounted ones have at least two or three trucks each. That means that the mobile production facilities are very few — perhaps 18 trucks that we know of. There may be more, but perhaps 18 that we know of. Just imagine trying to find 18 trucks among the thousands and thousands of trucks that travel the roads of Iraq every single day.

It took the inspectors four years to find out that Iraq was making biological agents. How long do you think it will take the inspectors to find even one of these 18 trucks, without Iraq coming forward as they are supposed to with the information about these kinds of capabilities?

These are sophisticated facilities. For example, they can produce anthrax and botulinum toxin. In fact, they can produce enough dry biological agent in a single month to kill thousands upon thousands of people. Dry agent of this type is the most lethal form for human beings.

By 1998, United Nations experts agreed that the Iraqis had perfected drying techniques for their biological weapons programmes. Now, Iraq has incorporated this drying expertise into these mobile production facilities.

We know from Iraq's past admissions that it has successfully weaponized not only anthrax but also other biological agents, including botulinum toxin, aflatoxin and ricin. But Iraq's research efforts did not stop there. Saddam Hussain has investigated dozens of biological agents causing diseases such as gas gangrene, plague, typhus, tetanus, cholera, camelpox and haemorrhagic fever. And he also has the wherewithal to develop smallpox.

The Iraqi regime has also developed ways to disperse lethal biological agents — widely, indiscriminately. Into the water supply. Into the air. For example, Iraq had a programme to modify aerial fuel tanks for Mirage jets. This video of an Iraqi test flight, obtained by UNSCOM some years ago, shows an Iraqi F-1 Mirage jet aircraft. Note the spray coming from beneath the Mirage. That is 2,000 litres of simulated anthrax that a jet is spraying.

A video was projected on screen.

In 1995, an Iraqi military officer, Mujahid Saleh Abdul Latif, told inspectors that Iraq intended the spray tanks to be mounted onto a MiG-21 that had been converted into an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV). UAVs outfitted with spray tanks constitute an ideal method for launching a terrorist attack using biological weapons. Iraq admitted to producing four spray tanks, but to this day it has provided no credible evidence that they were destroyed — evidence that was required by the international community.

There can be no doubt that Saddam Hussain has biological weapons and the capability to rapidly produce more, many more. And he has the ability to dispense these lethal poisons and diseases in ways that can cause massive death and destruction.

If biological weapons seem too terrible to contemplate, chemical weapons are equally chilling.

UNMOVIC already laid out much of this, and it is documented for all of us to read in UNSCOM's 1999 report on the subject. Let me set the stage with three key points that all of us need to keep in mind.

First, Saddam Hussain has used these horrific weapons — on another country and on his own people. In fact, in the history of chemical warfare no country has had more battlefield experience with chemical weapons since the First World War than Saddam Hussain's Iraq.

Secondly, as with biological weapons, Saddam Hussain has never accounted for vast amounts of chemical weaponry: 550 artillery shells with mustard, 30,000 empty munitions and enough precursors to increase his stockpile to as much as 500 tons of chemical agents. If we consider just one category of missing weaponry — 6,500 bombs from the Iran-Iraq war — UNMOVIC says the amount of chemical agent in them would be on the order of 1,000 tons. These quantities of chemical weapons are now unaccounted for. Mr. Blix has quipped that "Mustard gas is not marmalade. You are supposed to know what you did with it." We believe Saddam Hussain knows what he did with it, and he has not come clean with the international community. We have evidence that these weapons existed. What we do not have is evidence from Iraq that they have been destroyed or where they are. That is what we are still waiting for.

The third point: Iraq's record on chemical weapons is replete with lies. It took years for Iraq finally to admit that it had produced four tons of the deadly nerve agent VX. A single drop of VX on the skin will kill in minutes. Four tons. The admission came out only after inspectors collected documentation as a result of the defection of Hussain Kamal, Saddam Hussain's late son-in-law. UNSCOM also gained forensic evidence that Iraq had produced VX and put it into weapons for delivery. Yet to this day, Iraq denies it had ever weaponized VX. And on 27 January, UNMOVIC told this Council that it has information that conflicts with the Iraqi account of its VX programme.

We know that Iraq has embedded key portions of its illicit chemical weapons infrastructure within its legitimate civilian industry. To all outward appearances — even to experts — the infrastructure looks like an ordinary civilian operation. Illicit and legitimate production can go on simultaneously. Or, on

a dime, this dual-use infrastructure can turn from clandestine to commercial and then back again. These inspections would be unlikely — any inspections of such facilities would be unlikely — to turn up anything prohibited, especially if there is any warning that the inspections are coming. Call it ingenious or evil genius, but the Iraqis deliberately designed their chemical weapons programmes to be inspected. It is infrastructure with a built-in alibi.

Under the guise of dual-use infrastructure, Iraq has undertaken an effort to reconstitute facilities that were closely associated with its past programme to develop and produce chemical weapons. For example, Iraq has rebuilt key portions of the Tareq State establishment. Tareq includes facilities designed specifically for Iraq's chemical weapons programme and employs key figures from past programmes.

That is the production end of Saddam's chemical weapons business. What about the delivery end? I am going to show you a small part of a chemical complex called Al-Musayyib, a site that Iraq has used for at least three years to trans-ship chemical weapons from production facilities out to the field.

An image was projected on screen.

In May 2002, our satellites photographed the unusual activity in this picture. Here we see that cargo vehicles are again at this trans-shipment point, and we can see that they are accompanied by a decontamination vehicle associated with biological or chemical weapons activity. What makes this picture significant is that we have a human source who has corroborated that movement of chemical weapons occurred at this site at that time. So it is not just the photo, and it is not an individual seeing the photo: it is the photo and the knowledge of an individual being brought together to make the case.

An image was projected on screen.

This photograph of the site, taken two months later, in July, shows not only the previous site — which is the figure in the middle at the top with the bulldozer sign near it. It shows that the previous site and all of the other sites around that site have been fully bulldozed and graded. The topsoil has been removed. The Iraqis literally removed the crust of the Earth from large portions of this site in order to conceal chemical weapons evidence that would be there from years of chemical weapons activity.

To support its deadly biological and chemical weapons programmes, Iraq procures needed items from around the world, using an extensive clandestine network. What we know comes largely from intercepted communications and human sources who are in a position to know the facts. Iraq's procurement efforts include: equipment that can filter and separate micro-organisms and toxins involved in biological weapons; equipment that can be used to concentrate the agent; growth media that can be used to continue producing anthrax and botulinum toxin; sterilization equipment for laboratories; glass-lined reactors and specialty pumps that can handle corrosive chemical weapons agents and precursors; large amounts of thionyl chloride, a precursor for nerve and blister agents; and other chemicals such as sodium sulfide, an important mustard agent precursor.

Now, of course, Iraq will argue that these items can also be used for legitimate purposes. But if that is true, why do we have to learn about them by intercepting communications and risking the lives of human agents? With Iraq's well-documented history on biological and chemical weapons, why should any of us give Iraq the benefit of the doubt? I do not, and you will not either after you hear this next intercept.

Just a few weeks ago, we intercepted communications between two commanders in Iraq's Second Republican Guard Corps. One commander is going to be giving an instruction to the other. You will hear, as this unfolds, that what he wants to communicate to the other guy he wants to make sure that the other guy hears clearly, to the point of repeating it so that it gets written down and completely understood. Listen:

An audio tape, in Arabic, was played in the Council Chamber; an English translation provided by the United States delegation was projected on screen in the Chamber.

A: Hello —

B: Hello —

A: Hello —

B: May I help you, Sir?

A: Who is this?

B: Captain Ibrahim, Sir.

A: Captain Ibrahim, how are you?

B: God bless you, Sir.

A: How is your health?

B: May God preserve you.

A: How are you?

B: Good, praise God, Sir.

A: Captain Ibrahim.

B: Yes, Sir.

A: Write this down.

B: Yes, Sir.

[pause]

A: Hello?

B: Hello? Go ahead, Sir.

A: Hello, Ibrahim?

B: Yes, Sir.

A: Captain Ibrahim?

B: I am with you, Sir.

A: Remove —

B: Remove —

A: The expression —

B: The expression —

A: Nerve agents —

B: Nerve agents —

A: Whenever it comes up —

B: Whenever it comes up —

A: In the wireless instructions —

B: In the instructions —

A: Wireless —

B: Wireless —

A: Okay, buddy.

B: [Consider it] done, Sir.

Mr. Powell (United States of America): Let us review a few selected items of this conversation. Two officers talking to each other on the radio want to make that nothing is misunderstood: "Remove." — "Remove." — "The expression." — "The

expression — I got it." — "Nerve agents." — "Nerve agents." — "Wherever it comes up." — "Got it — wherever it comes up." — "In the wireless instructions." — "In the instructions." — "Correction — no — in the wireless instructions." — "Wireless — I got it."

Why does he repeat it that way? Why is he so forceful in making sure this is understood, and why did he focus on wireless instructions? Because the senior officer is concerned that somebody might be listening. Well, somebody was. "Nerve agents — stop talking about it. They are listening to us. Do not give any evidence that we have these horrible agents." But we know that they do, and this kind of conversation confirms it.

Our conservative estimate is that Iraq today has a stockpile of between 100 and 500 tons of chemical weapons agent. That is enough agent to fill 16,000 battlefield rockets. Even the low end, of 100 tons of agent, would enable Saddam Hussain to cause mass casualties across more than 100 square miles of territory — an area nearly five times the size of Manhattan.

Let me remind you of the 122-millimetre chemical warheads that the United Nations inspectors found recently. That discovery could very well be, as has been noted, the "tip of a submerged iceberg". The question before us all, my friends, is, when will we see the rest of the submerged iceberg?

Saddam Hussain has chemical weapons. Saddam Hussain has used such weapons. And Saddam Hussain has no compunction about using them again — against his neighbours and against his own people. And we have sources who tell us that he recently has authorized his field commanders to use them. He would not be passing out the orders if he did not have the weapons or the intent to use them.

We also have sources who tell us that, since the 1980s, Saddam's regime has been experimenting on human beings to perfect its biological or chemical weapons. A source said that 1,600 death-row prisoners were transferred in 1995 to a special unit for such experiments. An eyewitness saw prisoners tied down to beds, experiments conducted on them, blood oozing around the victims' mouths, and autopsies performed to confirm the effects on the prisoners. Saddam Hussain's inhumanity has no limits.

Let me turn now to nuclear weapons. We have no indication that Saddam Hussain has ever abandoned his nuclear weapons programme. On the contrary, we have more than a decade of proof that he remains determined to acquire nuclear weapons. To fully appreciate the challenge that we face today, remember that, in 1991, the inspectors searched Iraq's primary nuclear weapons facilities for the first time, and they found nothing to conclude that Iraq had a nuclear weapons programme. But, based on defector information, in May of 1991, Saddam Hussain's lie was exposed.

In truth, Saddam Hussain had a massive clandestine nuclear weapons programme that covered several different techniques to enrich uranium, including electro-magnetic isotope separation, gas centrifuge and gas diffusion. We estimate that this illicit programme cost the Iraqis several billion dollars. Nonetheless, Iraq continued to tell the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) that it had no nuclear weapons programme. If Saddam had not been stopped, Iraq could have produced a nuclear bomb by 1993, years earlier than most worst-case assessments that had been made before the war. In 1995, as a result of another defector, we found out that, after his invasion of Kuwait, Saddam Hussain had initiated a crash programme to build a crude nuclear weapon in violation of Iraq's United Nations obligations.

Saddam Hussain already possesses two out of the three key components needed to build a nuclear bomb. He has a cadre of nuclear scientists with the expertise, and he has a bomb design. Since 1998, his efforts to reconstitute his nuclear programme have been focused on acquiring the third and last component: sufficient fissile material to produce a nuclear explosion. To make the fissile material, he needs to develop an ability to enrich uranium.

Saddam Hussain is determined to get his hands on a nuclear bomb. He is so determined that he has made repeated covert attempts to acquire high-specification aluminium tubes from 11 different countries — even after inspections resumed.

An image was projected on screen.

These tubes are controlled by the Nuclear Suppliers Group precisely because they can be used as centrifuges for enriching uranium.

By now, just about everyone has heard of these tubes and we all know that there are differences of opinion. There is controversy about what these tubes are for. Most United States experts think they are intended to serve as rotors in centrifuges used to enrich uranium. Other experts and the Iraqis themselves argue that they are really to produce the rocket bodies for a conventional weapon — a multiple rocket launcher. Let me tell you what is not controversial about these tubes. First, all the experts who have analysed the tubes in our possession agree that they can be adapted for centrifuge use. Secondly, Iraq had no business buying them for any purpose. They are banned for Iraq.

I am no expert on centrifuge tubes, but just as an old army trooper, I can tell you a couple of things. First, it strikes me as odd that these tubes are manufactured to a tolerance that far exceeds United States requirements for comparable rockets. Maybe the Iraqis just manufacture their conventional weapons to a higher standard than we do, but I do not think so. Secondly, we actually have examined tubes from several different batches that were seized clandestinely before they reached Baghdad. What we notice in these different batches is a progression to higher and higher levels of specification, including, in the latest batch, an anodized coating on extremely smooth inner and outer surfaces. Why would they continue refining the specifications, go to all that trouble, for something that, if it were a rocket, would soon be blown into shrapnel when it went off?

The high-tolerance aluminium tubes are only part of the story. We also have intelligence from multiple sources that Iraq is attempting to acquire magnets and high-speed balancing machines. Both items can be used in a gas centrifuge programme to enrich uranium. In 1999 and 2000, Iraqi officials negotiated with firms in Romania, India, Russia and Slovenia for the purchase of a magnet production plant. Iraq wanted the plant to produce magnets weighing 20 to 30 grams. That is the same weight as the magnets used in Iraq's gas centrifuge programme before the Gulf War. This incident, linked with the tubes, is another indicator of Iraq's attempt to reconstitute its nuclear weapons programme. Intercepted communications from mid-2000 through last summer show that Iraqi front companies sought to buy machines that can be used to balance gas centrifuge rotors. One of these companies also had been involved in a failed effort in 2001 to smuggle aluminium tubes into Iraq.

People will continue to debate this issue, but there is no doubt in my mind. These illicit procurement efforts show that Saddam Hussain is very much focused on putting in place the key missing piece from his nuclear weapons programme — the ability to produce fissile material. He also has been busy trying to maintain the other key parts of his nuclear programme, particularly his cadre of key scientists.

It is noteworthy that, over the last 18 months, Saddam Hussain has paid increasing personal attention to Iraq's top nuclear scientists, a group that the Government-controlled press openly calls his "nuclear mujahideen". He regularly exhorts them and praises their progress. Progress towards what end? Long ago, the Security Council — this Council — required Iraq to halt all nuclear activities of any kind.

Let me talk now about the systems Iraq is developing to deliver weapons of mass destruction, in particular Iraq's ballistic missiles and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

First, missiles. We all remember that, before the Gulf War, Saddam Hussain's goal was missiles that flew not just hundreds, but thousands of kilometres. He wanted to strike not only his neighbours, but also nations far beyond his borders. While inspectors destroyed most of the prohibited ballistic missiles, numerous intelligence reports over the past decade from sources inside Iraq indicate Saddam Hussain retains a covert force of up to a few dozen SCUD-variant ballistic missiles. These are missiles with a range of 650 to 900 kilometres. We know from intelligence and Iraq's own admissions that Iraq's alleged "permitted" ballistic missiles, the Al-Samoud 2 and the Al-Fatah, violate the 150-kilometre limit established by this Council in resolution 687 (1991). These are prohibited systems.

UNMOVIC also has reported that Iraq has illegally imported 380 SA-2 rocket engines. These are likely for use in the Al-Samoud 2. Their import was illegal on three counts: resolution 687 (1991) prohibited all military shipments into Iraq; UNSCOM specifically prohibited use of these engines in surface-to-surface missiles; and, finally, as we have just noted, they are for a system that exceeds the 150-kilometre range limit. Worst of all, some of these engines were acquired as late as December, after this Council adopted resolution 1441 (2002).

An image was projected on screen.

What I want you to know today is that Iraq has programmes that are intended to produce ballistic missiles that fly over 1,000 kilometres. One programme is pursuing a liquid-fuel missile that would be able to fly more than 1,200 kilometres and you can see from this map as well as I can who will be in danger of these missiles.

An image was projected on screen.

As part of this effort — another little piece of evidence — Iraq has built an engine test stand that is larger than anything it has ever had. Notice the dramatic difference in size between the test stand on the left — the old one — and the new one on the right. Note the large exhaust vent; this is where the flame from the engine comes out. The exhaust vent on the right test stand is five times longer than the one on the left. The one on the left was used for short-range missiles. The one on the right is clearly intended for long-range missiles that can fly 1,200 kilometres. This photograph was taken in April 2002. Since then, the test stand has been finished and a roof has been put over it so that it would be harder for satellites to see what is going on underneath the test stand.

Saddam Hussain's intentions have never changed. He is not developing these missiles for self-defence. These are missiles that Iraq wants in order to project power, to threaten and to deliver chemical, biological and, if we let him, nuclear warheads.

An image was projected on screen.

Now, unmanned aerial vehicles. Iraq has been working on a variety of UAVs for more than a decade. This is just illustrative of what a UAV would look like. This effort has included attempts to modify for unmanned flight the MIG-21 and, with greater success, an aircraft called the L-29. However, Iraq is now concentrating not on these aeroplanes, but on developing and testing smaller UAVs such as this.

UAVs are well suited for dispensing chemical and biological weapons. There is ample intelligence that Iraq has dedicated much effort to developing and testing spray devices that can be adapted for UAVs. And, in the little that Saddam Hussain told us about UAVs, he has not told the truth. One of these lies is graphically and indisputably demonstrated by intelligence we collected on 27 June last year.

An image was projected on screen.

According to Iraq's 7 December declaration, its UAVs have a range of only 80 kilometres, but we detected one of Iraq's newest UAVs in a test flight that went 500 kilometres non-stop on autopilot in the racetrack pattern depicted here. Not only is this test well in excess of the 150 kilometres that the United Nations permits; the test was also left out of Iraq's 7 December declaration. The UAV was flown around and around and around in this circle so that its 80-kilometre limit really was 500 kilometres unrefuelled and on autopilot, in violation of all of Iraq's obligations under resolution 1441 (2002).

The linkages over the past 10 years between Iraq's UAV programme and biological and chemical warfare agents are of deep concern to us. Iraq could use these small UAVs, which have a wingspan of only a few metres, to deliver biological agents to its neighbours or, if transported, to other countries, including the United States.

The information I have presented to you about these terrible weapons and about Iraq's continued flouting of its obligations under Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) links to a subject I now want to spend a little bit of time on. That has to do with terrorism. Our concern is not just about these illicit weapons of mass destruction. It is also about the way these illicit weapons can be connected to terrorists and terrorist organizations that have no compunction about using such devices against innocent people around the world.

Iraq and terrorism go back decades. Baghdad trains Palestine Liberation Front members in small arms and explosives. Saddam uses the Arab Liberation Front to funnel money to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers in order to prolong the intifada. And it is no secret that Saddam's intelligence service was involved in dozens of attacks and attempted assassinations in the 1990s.

But what I want to bring to your attention today is the potentially much more sinister nexus between Iraq and the Al Qaeda terrorist network, a nexus that combines classic terrorist organizations and modern methods of murder.

Iraq today harbours a deadly terrorist network headed by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, an associate and collaborator of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda lieutenants. Zarqawi, a Palestinian born in Jordan, fought in the Afghan war more than a decade ago.

Returning to Afghanistan in 2000, he oversaw a terrorist training camp. One of his specialties — and one of the specialties of that camp — is poisons. When our coalition ousted the Taliban, the Zarqawi network helped to establish another poison and explosive training-centre camp. That camp is located in north-eastern Iraq.

An image was projected on screen.

You are looking at a picture of that camp.

The network is teaching its operatives how to produce ricin and other poisons. Let me remind you how ricin works. Eating less than a pinch — imagine a pinch of salt — of ricin in your food would cause shock, followed by circulatory failure. Death comes within 72 hours, and there is no antidote; there is no cure. It is fatal.

Those helping to run that camp are Zarqawi lieutenants, operating in the northern Kurdish areas outside Saddam-Hussain-controlled Iraq. But Baghdad has an agent in the most senior levels of the radical organization, Ansar al-Islam, that controls this corner of Iraq. In 2000, this agent offered Al Qaeda safe haven in the region. After we swept Al Qaeda from Afghanistan, some of its members accepted that safe haven. They remain there today.

Zarqawi's activities are not confined to that small corner of north-east Iraq. He travelled to Baghdad in May 2002 for medical treatment, staying in the capital of Iraq for two months while he recuperated to fight another day. During his stay, nearly two dozen extremists converged on Baghdad and established a base of operations there. Those Al Qaeda affiliates based in Baghdad now coordinate the movement of people, money and supplies into and throughout Iraq for his network, and they have now been operating freely in the capital for more than eight months.

Iraqi officials deny accusations of ties with Al Qaeda. These denials are simply not credible. Last year an Al Qaeda associate bragged that the situation in Iraq was "good" — that Baghdad could be transited quickly. We know that these affiliates are connected to Zarqawi because they remain, even today, in regular contact with his direct subordinates, including the poison cell plotters. They are involved in moving more than money and materiel: last year, two suspected Al Qaeda operatives were arrested crossing from Iraq into Saudi Arabia. They were linked to associates of the Baghdad

cell, and one of them received training in Afghanistan on how to use cyanide.

From his terrorist network in Iraq, Zarqawi can direct his network in the Middle East and beyond. We in the United States — all of us at the State Department and the Agency for International Development — lost a dear friend with the cold-blooded murder of Mr. Laurence Foley in Amman, Jordan, last October. A despicable act was committed that day: the assassination of an individual whose sole mission was to assist the people of Jordan. The captured assassin says his cell received money and weapons from Zarqawi for that murder. After the attack, an associate of the assassin left Jordan to go to Iraq to obtain weapons and explosives for further operations.

Iraqi officials protest that they are not aware of the whereabouts of Zarqawi or of any of his associates. Again, those protests are not credible. We know of Zarqawi's activities in Baghdad. I described them earlier; let me now add one other fact. We asked a friendly security service to approach Baghdad about extraditing Zarqawi and providing information about him and his close associates. This service contacted Iraqi officials twice, and we passed on details that should have made it easy to find Zarqawi. The network remains in Baghdad. Zarqawi still remains at large to come and go.

As my colleagues around this table and the citizens they represent in Europe know, Zarqawi's terrorism is not confined to the Middle East. Zarqawi and his network have plotted terrorist actions against countries including France, Britain, Spain, Italy, Germany and Russia. According to detainees, Abu Atiya, who graduated from Zarqawi's terrorist camp in Afghanistan, tasked at least nine North African extremists in 2001 to travel to Europe to conduct poison and explosive attacks. Since last year, members of this network have been apprehended in France, Britain, Spain and Italy. By our last count, 116 operatives connected to this global web have been arrested.

An image was projected on screen.

The chart you are looking at shows the network in Europe. We know about this European network and we know about its links to Zarqawi because the detainee who provided the information about the targets also provided the names of members of the network. Three of those he identified by name were arrested in France

last December. In the apartments of the terrorists, authorities found circuits for explosive devices and a list of ingredients to make toxins.

The detainee who helped piece this together says the plot also targeted Britain. Later evidence again proved him right. When the British unearthed a cell there, just last month, one British police officer was murdered during the disruption of the cell.

We also know that Zarqawi's colleagues have been active in the Pankisi Gorge, Georgia, and in Chechnya, Russia. The plotting to which they are linked is not mere chatter: members of Zarqawi's network say their goal was to kill Russians with toxins.

We are not surprised that Iraq is harbouring Zarqawi and his subordinates; this understanding builds on decades-long experience with respect to ties between Iraq and Al Qaeda. Going back to the early and mid-1990s, when Bin Laden was based in the Sudan, an Al Qaeda source tells us that Saddam and Bin Laden reached an understanding that Al Qaeda would no longer support activities against Baghdad.

Early Al Qaeda ties were forged by secret high-level Iraqi intelligence service contacts with Al Qaeda. We know that members of both organizations met repeatedly, and have met at least eight times at very senior levels since the early 1990s.

A foreign security service has told us that in 1996 Bin Laden met with a senior Iraqi intelligence official in Khartoum and that he later met the director of the Iraqi intelligence service.

Saddam became more interested as he saw Al Qaeda's appalling attacks. A detained Al Qaeda member tells us that Saddam was more willing to assist Al Qaeda after the 1998 bombings of our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. Saddam was also impressed by the Al Qaeda attack on the USS *Cole* in Yemen in October 2000.

Iraqis continued to visit Bin Laden in his new home in Afghanistan. A senior defector — one of Saddam's former intelligence chiefs in Europe — says Saddam sent his agents to Afghanistan sometime in the mid-1990s to provide training to Al Qaeda members on document forgery. From the late 1990s until 2001, the Iraqi embassy in Pakistan played the role of liaison to the Al Qaeda organization.

Some claim these contacts do not amount to much. They say Saddam Hussain's secular tyranny and Al Qaeda's religious tyranny do not mix. I am not comforted by that thought. Ambition and hatred are enough to bring Iraq and Al Qaeda together — enough so that Al Qaeda could learn how to build more sophisticated bombs and learn how to forge documents, and enough so that Al Qaeda could turn to Iraq for help in acquiring expertise on weapons of mass destruction. The record of Saddam Hussain's cooperation with other Islamist terrorist organizations is clear. Hamas, for example, opened an office in Baghdad in 1999, and Iraq has hosted conferences attended by Palestine Islamic Jihad. Those groups are at the forefront of sponsoring suicide attacks against Israel.

Al Qaeda continues to have a deep interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction. As with the story of Zarqawi and his network, I can trace the story of a senior terrorist operative, telling how Iraq provided training in those weapons to Al Qaeda. Fortunately, that operative is now detained, and he has told his story. I will relate it to you now as he himself described it.

That senior Al Qaeda terrorist was responsible for one of Al Qaeda's training camps in Afghanistan. His information comes first-hand, from his personal involvement at senior levels of Al Qaeda. He says Bin Laden and his top deputy in Afghanistan, deceased Al Qaeda leader Muhammad Atif, did not believe that Al Qaeda labs in Afghanistan were capable enough to manufacture these chemical or biological agents. They needed to go somewhere else. They had to look outside of Afghanistan for help. Where did they go? Where did they look? They went to Iraq.

The support that this detainee describes included Iraq offering chemical or biological weapons training for two Al Qaeda associates, beginning in December 2000. He says that a militant known as Abu Abdallah al-Iraqi had been sent to Iraq several times between 1997 and 2000 for help in acquiring poisons and gases. Abdullah al-Iraqi characterized the relationship he forged with Iraqi officials as "successful".

As I said at the outset, none of this should come as a surprise to any of us. Terrorism has been a tool used by Saddam for decades. Saddam was a supporter of terrorism long before these terrorist networks had a name, and this support continues. The nexus of poisons and terror is new; the nexus of Iraq and terror is old.

The combination is lethal. With this track record, Iraqi denials of supporting terrorism take their place alongside the other Iraqi denials of weapons of mass destruction. It is all a web of lies. When we confront a regime that harbours ambitions for regional domination, hides weapons of mass destruction and provides haven and active support for terrorists, we are not confronting the past, we are confronting the present. And unless we act, we are confronting an even more frightening future.

This has been a long and detailed presentation, and I thank you for your patience. But there is one more subject that I would like to touch on briefly. It should be a subject of deep and continuing concern to the Council: Saddam Hussain's violations of human rights.

Underlying all that I have said, underlying all the facts and the patterns of behaviour that I have identified, is Saddam Hussain's contempt for the will of the Council, his contempt for the truth and, most damning of all, his utter contempt for human life.

Saddam Hussain's use of mustard and nerve gases against the Kurds in 1988 was one of the twentieth century's most horrible atrocities. Five thousand men, women and children died. His campaign against the Kurds from 1987 to 1989 included mass summary executions, disappearances, arbitrary jailing, ethnic cleansing and the destruction of some 2,000 villages. He has also conducted ethnic cleaning against the Shi'ah Iraqis and the Marsh Arabs, whose culture has flourished for more than a millennium.

Saddam Hussain's police State ruthlessly eliminates anyone who dares to dissent. Iraq has more forced disappearance cases than any other country. Tens of thousands of people were reported missing in the past decade. Nothing points more clearly to Saddam Hussain's dangerous intentions and to the threat he poses to all of us than his calculated cruelty to his own citizens and to his neighbours. Clearly, Saddam Hussain and his regime will stop at nothing until something stops him.

For more than 20 years, by word and by deed, Saddam Hussain has pursued his ambition to dominate Iraq and the broader Middle East, using the only means he knows: intimidation, coercion and annihilation of all those who might stand in his way. For Saddam Hussain, possession of the world's most deadly

weapons is the ultimate trump card, the one he must hold to fulfil his ambition.

We know that Saddam Hussain is determined to keep his weapons of mass destruction. He is determined to make more. Given Saddam Hussain's history of aggression, given what we know of his grandiose plans, given what we know of his terrorist associations and given his determination to exact revenge on those who oppose him, should we take the risk that he will not someday use these weapons at a time and a place and in a manner of his choosing — at a time when the world is in a much weaker position to respond?

The United States will not, and cannot, run that risk to the American people. Leaving Saddam Hussain in possession of weapons of mass destruction for a few more months or years is not an option — not in a post-11-September world.

Over three months ago, the Council recognized that Iraq continued to pose a threat to international peace and security and that Iraq had been, and remained in material breach of its disarmament obligations. Today Iraq still poses a threat, and Iraq still remains in material breach. Indeed, by its failure to seize its one last opportunity to come clean and disarm, Iraq has put itself in deeper material breach and closer to the day when it will face serious consequences for its continued defiance of the Council.

We have an obligation to our citizens — we have an obligation to this body — to see that our resolutions are complied with. We wrote resolution 1441 (2002) not in order to go to war. We wrote resolution 1441 (2002) to try to preserve the peace. We wrote resolution 1441 (2002) to give Iraq one last chance. Iraq is not so far taking that one last chance. We must not shrink from whatever is ahead of us. We must not fail in our duty and our responsibility to the citizens of the countries that are represented by this body.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of China.

Mr. Tang Jiaxuan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to begin by congratulating Germany on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. It is a great pleasure to see Foreign Minister Fischer chair today's meeting.

I wish to take this opportunity to express my deep condolences with respect to the tragic deaths of the astronauts aboard the space shuttle *Columbia*, and to convey my heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved families.

I also wish to thank Secretary Powell for his presentation.

I would now like to share the following views on Iraq. First, the fact that the Foreign Ministers of most Council members are present at today's meeting shows the importance that all parties attach to the authority and role of the Security Council and their support for a resolution of the Iraqi issue within the framework of this world body. The Security Council has basically maintained unity and cooperation on this issue. That is of crucial importance to its appropriate resolution and represents the desire of the international community.

Secondly, China welcomes the United States move to provide the United Nations with its information and evidence on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, which we believe is consistent with the spirit of resolution 1441 (2002) and could help increase transparency. We hope that various parties will hand over their information and evidence to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). That will help make their inspections more effective. And, through their on-the-spot inspections, that information and evidence can also be evaluated. The two agencies should report their findings to the Security Council in a timely manner.

Thirdly, the inspections have been going on for more than two months now. The two agencies have been working very hard, and their work deserves our recognition. It is their view that they are not now in a position to draw conclusions, and they have suggested continuing with the inspections. We should respect the views of the two agencies and support the continuation of their work. We hope that the upcoming trip to Iraq by Chairman Blix and Director General ElBaradei on the 8th will yield positive results.

Not long ago, the two agencies pointed out some problems in the inspections. We urge Iraq to adopt a more proactive approach, to make further explanations and clarification as soon as possible and to cooperate with the inspection process.

Fourthly, the Security Council has a common stand on the elimination of weapons of mass

destruction in Iraq. This is fully reflected in the relevant Council resolutions, particularly 1441 (2002), which was adopted unanimously. The most important aspect at present remains the full implementation of this resolution. As for the next step to be taken, the Council should decide this through discussions among all members, based on the results of the inspections.

Fifthly, it is the universal desire of the international community to see a political settlement to the issue of Iraq, within the United Nations framework, and to avoid war. This is something to which the Security Council must attach due importance. As long as there is still the slightest hope for a political settlement, we should exert our utmost efforts to achieving it. China is ready to join others in working in this direction.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of China for his kind words addressed to me.

I now give the floor to The Right Honourable Jack Straw, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Member of Parliament.

Mr. Straw (United Kingdom): May I, as the Foreign Minister of China has done, congratulate Germany on taking over the presidency of the Security Council and congratulate you personally on assuming the Chair this morning.

We have just heard a most powerful and authoritative case against the Iraqi regime set out by United States Secretary of State Powell. The international community owes him its thanks for laying bare the deceit practised by the regime of Saddam Hussain — and worse, the very great danger which that regime represents.

Three months ago we united to send Iraq an uncompromising message: cooperate fully with weapons inspectors, or face disarmament by force. After years of Iraqi deception, when resolutions were consistently flouted, resolution 1441 (2002) was a powerful reminder of the importance of international law and of the authority of the Security Council itself.

United and determined, we gave Iraq a final opportunity to rid itself of its weapons of mass terror, of gases which can poison thousands in one go; of bacilli and viruses like anthrax and smallpox, which can disable and kill by the tens of thousands; of the

means to make nuclear weapons, which can kill by the million.

By resolution 1441 (2002), we strengthened inspections massively. The only missing ingredient was full Iraqi compliance — immediate, full and active cooperation. But the truth is — and we all know this — without that full and active cooperation, however strong the inspectors' powers, however good the inspectors, inspections in a country as huge as Iraq could never be sure of finding all Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

Sadly, the inspectors' reports last week, and Secretary Powell's presentation today, can leave us under no illusions about Saddam Hussain's response. Saddam Hussain holds United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) in the same contempt as all previous resolutions in respect of Iraq. Let us reflect on what that means: Saddam is defying every one of us, every nation here represented. He questions our resolve and is gambling that we will lose our nerve rather than enforce our will.

Paragraph 1 of resolution 1441 (2002) said that Saddam was and remained in "material breach" of Security Council resolutions. Paragraph 4 of that same resolution then set two clear tests for a further material breach by Iraq. The first test was that Iraq must not make "false statements" or "omissions" in its declaration. But the Iraqi document submitted to us on 7 December, as we have heard from Secretary Powell, was long on repetition but short on fact. It was not full, nor accurate, nor complete. By anyone's definition, it was a "false statement". Its central premise — that Iraq possesses no weapons of mass destruction — is a lie. This outright lie was repeated yesterday on television by Saddam Hussain.

The declaration also has obvious omissions, not least in a failure to explain what has happened to the large quantities of chemical and biological weapons materiel and munitions unaccounted for by United Nations weapons inspectors in 1998. And there is no admission of Iraq's extensive efforts to develop weapons of mass destruction since the last round of United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspections ended in December 1998.

Paragraph 4 goes on to set a second test for a further material breach — namely, a "failure by Iraq at any time to comply with, and cooperate fully in the implementation of" resolution 1441 (2002). Following

the presentation by the inspectors last week, and today's briefing by Secretary Powell, it is clear that Iraq has failed this test. These briefings have confirmed our worst fears, that Iraq has no intention of relinquishing its weapons of mass destruction, no intention of following the path of peaceful disarmament set out in Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). Instead of open admissions and transparency, we have a charade, where a veneer of superficial cooperation masks wilful concealment, the extent of which has been devastatingly revealed this morning by Secretary Powell.

In his report last week, Mr. Blix set out a number of instances in which Iraqi behaviour reveals a determination to avoid compliance. Why is Iraq refusing to allow the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) to use a U-2 plane to conduct aerial imagery and surveillance operations? When will Iraq account for the 6,500 bombs that could carry up to 1,000 tonnes of chemical agent? How will Iraq justify having a prohibited chemical precursor for mustard gas? And how will Iraq explain the concealment of nuclear documents and the development of a missile programme in clear contravention of United Nations resolutions?

There is only one possible conclusion from all of this, which is that Iraq is in further material breach, as set out in United Nations Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). I believe that all colleagues here, all members, will share our deep sense of frustration that Iraq is choosing to spurn this final opportunity to achieve a peaceful outcome.

Given what has to follow, and the difficult choice now facing us, it would be easy to turn a blind eye to the wording of resolution 1441 (2002) and hope for a change of heart by Iraq. Easy, but wrong, because if we did so we would be repeating the mistakes of the past 12 years and empowering a dictator who believes that his diseases and poison gases are essential weapons to suppress his own people and to threaten his neighbours, and that by defiance of the United Nations he can indefinitely hoodwink the world.

Under the French presidency two weeks ago, we had a special meeting on the dangers of international terrorism — a meeting which I greatly welcomed — and the grave danger to the world of terrorists acquiring weapons of mass destruction through the

connivance of rogue States. Secretary Powell has today set out deeply worrying reports about the presence in Iraq of one of Osama bin Laden's lieutenants, Al-Zarqawi, and other members of Al Qaeda and their efforts to develop poisons.

It defies the imagination that all of this could be going on without the knowledge of Saddam Hussain. The recent discovery of the poison ricin in London has underlined again that this is a threat which all of us face.

Saddam must be left in no doubt as to the serious consequences and the serious situation which he now faces. The United Kingdom does not want war. What we want is for the United Nations system to be upheld. But the logic of resolution 1441 (2002) is inescapable. Time is now very short. The Council will have further reports from the inspectors on Friday week, 14 February. If non-cooperation continues, the Council must meet its responsibilities.

Our world faces many threats, from poverty and disease to civil war and terrorism. Working through this great institution, we have the capacity to tackle these challenges together. But if we are to do so, then the decisions we have to take must have a force beyond mere words.

This is a moment of choice for Saddam and for the Iraqi regime. But it is also a moment of choice for this institution, the United Nations. The pre-war predecessor of the United Nations — the League of Nations — had the same fine ideals as the United Nations. But the League failed because it could not create actions from its words. It could not back diplomacy with a credible threat and, where necessary, the use of force, so small evils went unchecked. Tyrants became emboldened, and then greater evils were unleashed.

At each stage, good men said, "Wait. The evil is not big enough to challenge". Then, before their eyes, the evil became too big to challenge. We slipped slowly down a slope, never noticing how far we had gone until it was too late.

We owe it to our history, as well as to our future, not to make the same mistake again.

The President: I thank the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the kind words he addressed to me.

I call now on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, His Excellency Mr. Igor Ivanov.

Mr. Ivanov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): While I am in the United States, I should like first of all, on behalf of the leadership and the people of Russia, to express profound condolences to the Government and the people of the United States of America following the tragic death of the crew of the space shuttle *Columbia*. We share the grief of our American partners, with whom we are actively cooperating in outer space, primarily in the implementation of the international space station project.

The work of the astronauts is probably the best demonstration of the shared fundamental interests of humankind and of the need to pool our intellectual and creative efforts in the name of the progress of civilization.

Russia views today's meeting in the context of the consistent efforts of the Security Council to find a political settlement to the situation surrounding Iraq, on the basis of complete and scrupulous compliance with the relevant resolutions.

The unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) and the deployment of international inspectors in Iraq have demonstrated the ability of the international community to act together in the interests of attaining a common goal. We are convinced that maintaining the unity of the world community, primarily within the context of the Security Council, and our concerted action, in strict compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council, are the most reliable means of resolving the problem of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq through political means.

There is no doubt that we all want to resolve this problem. It was with that in mind that we listened very closely to the presentation given by Secretary of State Powell. Russia continues to believe that the Security Council — and, through it, the entire international community — must have all of the information it needs in order to determine whether or not there are remaining weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

The information given to us today definitely will require very serious and thorough study. Experts in our countries must immediately begin to analyse it and

then draw the appropriate conclusions. The main point is that this information must immediately be handed over for processing by the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), including through direct on-site verification during the inspections in Iraq.

Baghdad must give the inspectors answers to the questions that we heard in the presentation given by the United States Secretary of State. We appeal once again to all States immediately to hand over to the international inspectors any information that can help them discharge their responsible mandate.

The information provided today by the United States Secretary of State once again convincingly indicates that the activities of the international inspectors in Iraq must be continued. They alone can say to what extent Iraq is complying with the demands of the Security Council. They alone can help the Security Council work out and adopt carefully balanced decisions — the best possible decisions.

The statements made by Mr. Blix and by Mr. ElBaradei in this very Chamber on 27 January show that a unique inspection mechanism has been deployed in Iraq which has everything it needs to ensure compliance with resolution 1441 (2002) and other Security Council resolutions. This great potential must be used to the fullest.

The Security Council and all its members must do everything they can to support the inspection process. Russia, for its part, intends to continue actively to promote the creation of the best possible conditions for the work of the international inspectors in Iraq. In particular, we are prepared to provide an aircraft for aerial monitoring and, if need be, additional inspectors as well.

Russia welcomes the continuation of dialogue between the Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC and the Director General of the IAEA with Iraq on outstanding unresolved issues. We hope that this dialogue will be extremely concrete and productive. It is facilitated, *inter alia*, by the fact that work has been carried out according to the timetable set out in resolution 1284 (1999), which should make the international inspections and monitoring even more systematic and effective, especially with respect to clarifying key disarmament tasks by the end of March of this year.

It is perfectly obvious that the work of UNMOVIC and the IAEA can be effective only with full cooperation in good faith from Iraq. Iraq should be the first to be concerned about providing definitive clarity on the question of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. That is the only way to reach a political settlement, including the lifting of the sanctions on Iraq. Baghdad should fully realize how crucial this is and do everything in its power so that the international inspectors can carry out their mandate.

Recently, we have often heard the expression that time is running out for a settlement to the question of Iraq. Of course, resolution 1441 (2002) aims to quickly achieve practical results, but it does not set out any concrete time frame. The inspectors alone can advise the Security Council on how much time they need to carry out the tasks entrusted to them. In this respect, we cannot rule out the possibility that at some stage the Security Council may need to adopt a new resolution, or perhaps more than one resolution. The main point is that our efforts should continue to be aimed at doing everything possible to facilitate the inspection process, which has proven its effectiveness and which makes it possible to implement Council decisions by peaceful means.

Unfortunately, the current situation concerning Iraq is far from being the last problem whose solution we will all still have to work on. The international community of the twenty-first century is confronting new global threats and challenges requiring a unified response from all States. A graphic example of that approach was the creation of the broad coalition to combat the primary and most dangerous threat of our time: international terrorism. It is precisely because of the unity of the world community that initial success has been achieved in combating that scourge. However, it is perfectly obvious that we are only beginning a very difficult battle with terrorism. And the information from the United States Secretary of State about the activities of Al Qaeda is further corroboration of that fact.

The unity of the world community will continue to be the principal guarantee of the effectiveness of the world's action. It is precisely unity that is essential in our approach to all problems, however complicated they may be. Tactical differences may arise, it is true. And probably there will be quite a few of them, given the complexity of the tasks we need to resolve. But

they must not overshadow the strategic goals that are in the interests of our common security and stability.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. François-Xavier Ngoubeyou, Minister of State in charge of External Relations of Cameroon.

Mr. Ngoubeyou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, on behalf of Cameroon and its head of State, His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, I wish to reiterate to the American people and Government our sincere condolences following the tragic death of seven astronauts on 1 February 2003 in the mid-flight explosion of the space shuttle *Columbia*. We particularly extend our sympathy to their bereaved and distressed families here in the United States, in Israel and in India. The conquest of space is one of the most important peaceful adventures in the history of all humankind. Therefore, the terrible catastrophe of Saturday affects us all very much.

With respect to the question before the Council today, I would first like to offer you, Sir, the sincere congratulations of Cameroon upon your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. You may rest assured of my delegation's complete cooperation and support. I would also like to express my appreciation to France for its particularly dynamic and productive presidency.

My country wishes to express its appreciation to the President of the United States, who, in his concern to act and consult with the United Nations, in his statement of 28 January 2003 requested the convening of this meeting of the Security Council. He decided to entrust Secretary of State Colin Powell, to whom we have just listened attentively, with presenting to the Security Council — and hence to the United Nations and the international community — “information and intelligence about Iraq's illegal weapons programme”.

The information is certainly troubling, at the least. We take note of it. It is now up to us to make the best use of that information, in the spirit of the process set out in Council resolution 1441 (2002) of 8 November 2002. The elements of information that have just been presented are useful, for they can facilitate, in particular, the inspection work now under way. In these conditions, would it not be appropriate to give the inspectors time to make use of this information?

The Security Council is meeting once again on the issue of Iraq. To date, the Iraqi crisis is the situation

of highest profile in the annals of the Security Council, so attentive are international public opinion and the peoples of the entire world to the development and evolution of this situation.

This is undoubtedly the first time since the Cuban missile crisis that the peoples of the entire world are assessing the two possible options in a crisis of this seriousness: a diplomatic and therefore peaceful settlement, or a war bringing in its wake the grave consequences that such an action holds for Iraq, the Middle East and the world.

I am well aware that our Council does not deliberate or adopt resolutions under pressure from public opinion, even global opinion. But how can we ignore today the fact that the disarmament of Iraq is a divisive question revealing that there are two schools. There are those — who are many — who advocate a peaceful settlement and a rejection of the use of arms. And there are those who advocate a military solution and who could be reinforced by the conduct of the Iraqi authorities, who, despite the seriousness of the situation, are so little inclined towards active, complete, sincere and unambiguous cooperation with the inspection missions.

Both groups certainly assess the role and the mission that belongs to the Security Council. The Council is today considered to be a decisive player from whom the world expects a solution. Therefore, Cameroon, like other members of the Security Council and Member States of the United Nations, can only recommend the continuation and implementation of forceful, robust and decisive action to compel the Iraqi authorities to conform to the spirit and the letter of resolution 1441 (2002) — to cooperate fully with the inspection teams.

Cameroon welcomes the attention, the interest and the commitment of the United States with regard to the eradication of all weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. The preservation of international peace and security, which underlies its determination, is an eminently noble and generous objective. And because we understand the matter thus, we are convinced that the United States — for the defence of its own interests and of those of the international community — will base its action in the spirit of the San Francisco Conference, which founded the United Nations. We are convinced that it, imbued with that spirit, will assume all of its responsibilities under the current

circumstances, within the framework of, and in accordance with, the provisions of the Charter and of Security Council resolutions.

Let us not forget: what we are dealing with is the maintenance of international peace and security. In that area, the central role entrusted to the Security Council by the Charter must be reaffirmed, preserved and respected. Indeed, it is up to the Council, in cohesion and in unity, to decide one way or the other.

As I said at the beginning of my statement, Cameroon understands and shares the concerns and the apprehensions of the United States, as well as its determination to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction. Today, my country wishes above all to reaffirm that, for the United States as well as for the rest of the international community, war is not inevitable. Let us give the inspectors the time to utilize, to study and to verify the elements of information that have been presented to us. Cameroon believes that the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) must, as they have requested, continue their delicate mission with greater commitment and in a more robust way, using the most productive technological means.

Within the framework of that mission, Iraq and its authorities must comply, without restriction or delay, with all the obligations imposed on it in the Security Council. We call upon and urge the Iraqi authorities to consider the current context in a responsible way, to realistically interpret what is being said, prepared and done with regard to Iraq. Once again, we call upon Iraq to cooperate fully and actively with UNMOVIC and with the IAEA. That is in Iraq's interest, and it is in the Iraqi people's interest.

Because Iraq has violated many Council resolutions in the past, today it is up to Iraq to show compliance with them; it is up to Iraq to provide proof of its firm will to cooperate, to declare the state of its military-industrial infrastructure. It is up to the inspectors to verify the truth of that declaration. May those who yesterday were able to convince Iraq resume that endeavour today, because tomorrow it may be too late.

The disarmament of Iraq must not appear to be a confrontation between that country and the United States. Iraq's disarmament is of interest and of concern to the entire international community. It is therefore a

matter between the Security Council — hence the United Nations — and Iraq. International law, multilateral diplomacy and collective action in the United Nations must be made to prevail within and in the framework of the United Nations. Moreover, the authorities appointed by the Security Council to gather information that will enable it to decide must be able to work calmly, free of media pressure and of heated discourse that feeds confusion and suspicion.

Finally, we appeal to every Member of the United Nations that might have information, documents or testimony about the possible presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq to follow the example of the United States and to provide such information to the Security Council, which will be obliged to examine it and to take it into account in its future deliberations on the implementation of resolution 1441 (2002).

At this critical time, when our time is becoming shorter, Cameroon welcomes the departure for Baghdad of Mr. Hans Blix and Mr. Mohammed ElBaradei on 8 February. But we wonder — under the grave circumstances that prevail, in which peace hangs in the balance — whether the time has not come for the Council to ask the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize laureate, to go to Iraq to speak with President Saddam Hussain on urgent ways and means to speed a peaceful resolution of this burning and crucial situation. The present situation, fraught with dangers for peace, calls on all of us. We must not await the inevitable before acting. Let us anticipate; let us act, today, here and now.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France, His Excellency Mr. Dominique Galouzeau de Villepin.

Mr. Galouzeau de Villepin (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, France wishes to reiterate our condolences to our American friends with regard to the terrible tragedy that occurred with the space shuttle *Columbia*.

I congratulate the German presidency of the Security Council on having organized this meeting, and I thank Colin Powell, Secretary of State of the United States, for having taken the initiative of convening it. I listened with much attention to the elements that he shared with us. They contained information, indications and questions that deserve further exploration. It will be up to the inspectors to assess the facts, as envisaged in resolution 1441 (2002). Already,

his presentation has provided new justification for the approach chosen by the United Nations; it must strengthen our common determination.

By unanimously adopting resolution 1441 (2002), we chose to act through the path of inspections. That policy rests on three fundamental points: a clear objective on which we cannot compromise — the disarmament of Iraq; a method — a rigorous system of inspections that requires Iraq's active cooperation and that affirms the Security Council's central role at each stage; and finally, a requirement — that of our unity. It gave full force to the message that we unanimously addressed to Baghdad. I hope that today's meeting will enable us to strengthen that unity.

Important results have already been achieved. The United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are working. The deployment on the ground of more than one hundred inspectors, with 300 visits a month on average, an increase in the number of sites inspected and full access to the presidential sites, in particular, are all major achievements. In the nuclear domain, these first two months have enabled the IAEA to make — as Mr. ElBaradei emphasized — good progress in its knowledge of Iraq's capacity, and that is a key element.

In the areas covered by UNMOVIC, the inspections have provided us with useful information. For example, Mr. Blix has indicated that no trace of biological or chemical agents has thus far been detected by the inspectors, either in the analyses of samples taken on the inspected sites or in the 12 empty warheads discovered on 16 January at Ukhaider.

There are still grey areas in Iraq's cooperation. The inspectors have reported real difficulties. In his 27 January report, Mr. Blix gave several examples of unresolved questions in the ballistic, chemical and biological domains. These uncertainties are not acceptable. France will continue to pass on all the information it has so they can be better defined.

Right now, our attention has to be focused as a priority on the biological and chemical domains. It is there that our presumptions about Iraq are the most significant. Regarding the chemical domain, we have evidence of its capacity to produce VX and yperite. In the biological domain, the evidence suggests the possible possession of significant stocks of anthrax and

botulism toxin, and possibly a production capability. Today the absence of long-range delivery systems reduces the potential threat of these weapons, but we have disturbing signs of Iraq's continued determination to acquire ballistic missiles beyond the authorized 150-kilometre range. In the nuclear domain, we must clarify in particular any attempt by Iraq to acquire aluminium tubes.

So it is a demanding démarche, anchored in resolution 1441 (2002), that we must take together. If this path were to fail and lead us into a dead end, then we rule out no option, including in the final analysis the recourse to force, as we have said all along.

In such a hypothesis, however, several answers will have to be clearly provided to all Governments and all peoples of the world to limit the risks and uncertainties. To what extent do the nature and scope of the threat justify the recourse to force? How do we make sure that the considerable risks of such intervention are actually kept under control? This obviously requires a collective démarche of responsibility on the part of the world community. In any case, it must be clear that, in the context of such an option, the United Nations will have to be at the centre of the action to guarantee Iraq's unity, ensure the region's stability, protect civilians and preserve the unity of the world community.

For now, the inspections regime favoured by resolution 1441 (2002) must be strengthened, since it has not been explored to the end. Use of force can only be a final recourse. Why go to war if there still exists an unused space in resolution 1441 (2002)? Consistent with the logic of that resolution, we must therefore move on to a new stage and further strengthen the inspections. With the choice between military intervention and an inspections regime that is inadequate for lack of cooperation on Iraq's part, we must choose to strengthen decisively the means of inspection. That is what France is proposing today.

To do this, we must define with Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei the requisite tools for increasing their operational capabilities. Let us double or triple the number of inspectors and open up more regional offices. Let us go further: Why not establish a specialized body to keep under surveillance the sites and areas already inspected? Let us substantially increase the capabilities for monitoring and collecting information on Iraqi territory. France is ready to

provide full support; it is ready to deploy Mirage IV observer aircraft. Let us collectively establish a coordination and information-processing centre that would supply Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei, in real time and in a coordinated way, with all the intelligence resources they might need. Let us list the unresolved disarmament questions and rank them by importance. With the consent of the leaders of the inspection teams, let us define a demanding and realistic time frame for moving forward in the assessment and elimination of problems. There must be regular follow-up to the progress made in Iraq's disarmament.

This enhanced regime of inspections and monitoring could be usefully complemented by having a permanent United Nations coordinator for disarmament in Iraq, stationed in Iraq and working under the authority of Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei.

Iraq must cooperate actively, however. The country must comply immediately with the demands of Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei, in particular by permitting meetings with Iraqi scientists without witnesses; agreeing to the use of U2 observer flights; adopting legislation to prohibit the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction; and immediately handing over to the inspectors all relevant documents on unresolved disarmament questions, in particular in the biological and chemical domains. Those handed over on 20 January constitute a step in the right direction. The 3,000 pages of documents discovered at the home of a researcher show that Baghdad must do more. Absent documents, Iraq must be able to present credible testimony. The Iraqi authorities must also provide the inspectors with answers to the new elements presented by Colin Powell.

Between now and the inspectors' next report, on 14 February, Iraq will have to provide new elements. The upcoming visit to Baghdad by the leaders of the inspectors will have to be the occasion for clear results to that end.

This is the demanding démarche that we must take together towards a new stage. Its success presupposes, today as yesterday, that the international community will remain united and mobilized. It is our moral and political duty first to devote all our energy to Iraq's disarmament in peace and in compliance with the rule of law and justice. France is convinced that we can succeed on this demanding path so long as we maintain

our unity and cohesion. This is option of collective responsibility.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Luis Ernesto Derbez, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico.

Mr. Derbez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Mexico has taken due note of the useful information presented to the Council by the Government of the United States. This presentation clearly contains valuable information to help determine and guide the Council's decisions. It will also give us additional elements of judgement in determining the extent to which Iraq has complied with the resolutions adopted by this organ.

The presentation by Secretary of State Powell reinforces Mexico's firm belief in the need for progress towards the effective and verifiable elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, as well as the facilities for developing them. Mexico's position in the Security Council has been unequivocally aimed at achieving the disarmament of Iraq in the most effective way possible and by peaceful means, while ensuring at all times that this goal is achieved at the lowest cost in terms of human suffering and economic instability and without undermining the urgent battle against international terrorism.

Consistent with that position, the Government of Mexico has made direct approaches to the Iraqi authorities, urging them to cooperate without delay in the manner required by the inspectors. We have shared the content of these initiatives with other members of the Security Council so that this message might be conveyed to the Iraqi authorities as forcefully as possible and through the greatest possible number of channels. Once again, with the presence of the representatives of Iraq at this table, we repeat our call for their authorities concretely, immediately and urgently to translate their declared intentions into active cooperation and genuine collaboration with the inspection process, as provided for in resolution 1441 (2002).

Mexico reaffirms its confidence in the inspection activities now under way as the best possible way to detect, destroy and verify the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We are in favour of intensifying and strengthening those inspections, as well as the assistance which members of the Council and the international community in general may

provide to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and to the International Atomic Energy Agency to successfully accomplish their delicate mission.

It is in that context that Mexico recognizes the importance of Secretary of State Powell's presentation to the Security Council. It warmly welcomes the contribution of elements that support the work of the inspectors, enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of their mission and help to expedite and increase the reliability of the disarmament process.

Mexico's emphasis on a multilateral approach is, indeed, consistent with the views and convictions of the Mexican people. But it is also in keeping with a pragmatic concern to build the international consensus required by a task of such global implications as the elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

That is why Mexico reiterates its readiness to continue to make a constructive contribution to the work of the Security Council, in the conviction that cooperation and the search for multilateral solutions will give greater weight to the decisions of this body. Perhaps even more important, we reiterate our demand to the Iraqi Government that it work urgently and on an ongoing basis to grant access to all of its facilities so that the inspections can be successfully concluded. That will make it possible at the end of this process not only to have a strengthened and revitalized United Nations system, but also to provide the international community with guarantees that the mission of disarmament has been fully accomplished.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Solomon Passy, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria.

Mr. Passy (Bulgaria): I should like first to congratulate Germany on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to thank France for its extraordinarily efficient presidency in January.

Allow me also to express the deepest condolences of the Bulgarian people with regard to the *Columbia* space shuttle tragedy — to the families and the peoples of the seven astronauts.

I should like to join previous speakers in expressing my appreciation for the information that Secretary of State Colin Powell has laid out before us. Yesterday, Bulgaria also aligned itself with the position

of the European presidency, on behalf of the European Union, regarding Iraq.

The very fact that the United States Government has chosen to present this information to the Security Council strengthens the centrality of the Council, and we fully endorse that approach. The strong and compelling evidence presented by Secretary Powell sheds additional light on the realities in Iraq as far as the implementation of resolution 1441 (2002) and other relevant Council resolutions is concerned. I hope that the data that has been made public can still be used for the effective accomplishment of the work of the inspectors of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I would like to believe that what we heard today from the United States Secretary of State will have the same mobilizing effect on the international community as the adoption of resolution 1441 (2002).

Three months ago, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1441 (2002) as a last chance for the disarmament of Iraq by peaceful means. I am confident that today's meeting of the Council — the body which bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security — will carry a compelling message to the international community.

Today's ministerial discussion in the Security Council comes in the wake of the reports of the UNMOVIC and IAEA inspectors submitted on 27 January and of the discussion that followed on 29 January. The active cooperation of the Iraqi authorities is a prerequisite for the full implementation of resolution 1441 (2002). Unfortunately, Iraq's cooperation has not been satisfactory on the substantive issues identified by the inspectors. We insist that Iraq provide additional and complete information confirming the destruction of any weapons of mass destruction available to it and duly address the specific questions already raised by the international community about the Iraqi weapons programme.

It is of paramount importance that Iraq give, unconditionally and immediately, clear evidence that it has fully changed its attitude to one of proactive cooperation with the inspectors. That is the only way in which the disarmament of Iraq can be brought to a successful end in a peaceful manner. So far, Iraq has been in material breach of the relevant Security

Council resolutions, including resolution 1441 (2002), and the Secretary of State has just provided new evidence proving that.

By the time of the next briefing, scheduled for 14 February, we expect Iraq to have complied fully with its disarmament obligations, and we look forward to another objective, impartial and professional report from the inspectors.

Bulgaria's position has always been that all means should be used for the peaceful settlement of the present crisis. My country believes that the effective and peaceful disarmament of Iraq is still possible through the implementation of resolution 1441 (2002). At the same time, the international community should assume its responsibilities for ensuring the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, thus strengthening the role and the authority of the United Nations in international relations. In the event that, in the near future, the inspectors do not report to the Council that Iraq has changed its attitude with regard to its obligations, the Security Council will have to take the appropriate action for the implementation of the relevant resolutions adopted since 1990.

Hopefully, today's meeting will represent a further step towards the unity of the Council on the issue of Iraq, reinforcing the efforts of the international community to fight the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

We hope that the Council will face its great responsibilities with unanimity and will reaffirm its primary role in dealing with the crisis. The Iraqi people deserve a better destiny and a peaceful future, and Bulgaria is ready to contribute towards achieving that goal.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Khurshid Kasuri, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan.

Mr. Kasuri (Pakistan): I should like to begin by conveying condolences, on behalf of the Government of Pakistan and on my own account, to the Government and the people of the United States on the tragic loss of the space shuttle *Columbia* and of the lives of the seven astronauts.

Germany is presiding over the Security Council at a critical moment for international peace and security. Your stewardship of the Council at this historic

meeting, Mr. Foreign Minister, will not only elevate our proceedings but also ensure that they will be productive in moving us towards peace.

Allow me to join my colleagues in thanking Secretary of State Colin Powell for his important presentation to the Security Council. We welcome the continuation of the United States initiative to work through the United Nations in seeking the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Paragraph 10 of resolution 1441 (2002) requests all Member States to give full support to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the discharge of their mandates. We believe that the information provided today by the United States is in response to the provisions of resolution 1441 (2002). Other States possessing such information should also share it fully with the Council.

The extensive and effective presentation made by Secretary Powell has provided the Council with considerable additional information. It will add to the knowledge base of Council members and, even more important, to the effectiveness of UNMOVIC and the IAEA in carrying out their mandate. This information will enhance the ability of the inspectors to address areas of concern and to pursue more specific lines of action in the inspection process. We therefore believe that this is a significant step forward in responding to the challenge that the Council faces in securing the full implementation of its resolutions regarding the elimination of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. We hope that the concerns raised by Secretary Powell will receive credible answers from Iraq in the inspections process.

The Security Council has already held detailed discussions on the reports of Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei, presented to the Council on 27 January. We agree with Mr. Blix that Security Council resolutions 687 (1991), 1284 (1999) and 1441 (2002) impose a clear obligation on Iraq to declare its weapons of mass destruction and to allow unhindered verification that those weapons have been destroyed and eliminated.

Following the last briefing to the Security Council by Mr. ElBaradei and Mr. Blix, the head of UNMOVIC, the majority of the Security Council was of the view that full verification of the Iraqi declaration would require more active cooperation from Iraq. We

share that view. In that regard, Mr. Blix has asked the Iraqi Government to take three steps in the context of his forthcoming visit to Baghdad: first, to allow free and unrestricted aerial surveillance, including by manned and unmanned reconnaissance vehicles; secondly, to agree to private interviews of Iraqi scientists, without the presence of minders; and, thirdly, to adopt legislation prohibiting the acquisition and local production of weapons of mass destruction. Iraq should move swiftly towards meeting these requirements, and should respond to the specific concerns on substantive issues raised by Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei.

Resolution 1441 (2002) envisages that UNMOVIC and the IAEA will submit reports to the Council on Iraq's cooperation. The briefings by Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei to the Council on 27 January were not meant to be conclusive. We believe that we should await their conclusions, positive or negative. Under resolution 1441 (2002), what the inspectors' report is to constitute is the essential basis for the judgement that the Security Council is supposed to make regarding Iraqi compliance.

The international community is justified in seeking to bring about the earliest possible compliance by Iraq with the Council's resolutions prescribing the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, as the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must bear in mind other imperatives.

The first imperative is to ameliorate the suffering and ensure the welfare of the Iraqi people. They have suffered too much for too long; they should not suffer any more. The second is to preserve the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. Any erosion of Iraq's integrity could have devastating effects on regional and global peace and stability. The third is to preserve the political and economic stability of the region, including through the resolution of other outstanding issues and conflicts in the area, including the dispute in South Asia over Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement issued this morning in Islamabad, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, stated that

"The Muslim *umma*, from the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific, is deeply worried that war may break out, and is worried about its implications not only for the people of Iraq, but

for the future stability and polity of the Islamic countries. At this time the need for inter-civilizational harmony has never been greater".

The Prime Minister went on to say that

"A heavy burden has been placed on the international community, particularly on Security Council members and on Iraq, to take timely, effective and adequate steps to surmount this challenge to peace and stability. To avert a disaster and tragedy for the Iraqi people, Pakistan calls upon President Saddam Hussain to do his utmost and to put the Iraqi people first. It is imperative that President Saddam weigh all options, to save the people of Iraq from death and destruction on an unprecedented scale".

I would like to conclude by saying that at this critical moment Pakistan wishes to reaffirm its determination to act, within and outside the Council, on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter, which include the pacific resolution of disputes, the full implementation of Security Council resolutions, the promotion of the well-being of people and the preservation of international peace and stability.

The President: I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Ana Palacio Vallelersundi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain.

Ms. Palacio Vallelersundi (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to join those who have spoken before me in congratulating Germany on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council, another European presidency at a moment of whose importance for the future of the Council and for the international community as a whole we are all aware.

I would also like to associate myself with those who have expressed their gratitude for the information provided by Secretary of State Colin Powell. But I would first of all like to say how important it is that he has brought that information to the Security Council. This once again represents recognition by the United States of America of the importance of keeping the question of Iraq within the framework of the United Nations. Similarly, this reminds us that we are dealing with a responsibility that belongs to the entire international community.

The Secretary of State has put before us compelling data that point to the existence of weapons

of mass destruction and to the consequences of their possible use. Those data also confirm that Iraq is deceiving the international community and that it is not cooperating. Legally speaking, and in the context of the United Nations and of resolution 1441 (2002) in particular, that information leads to the legal conclusion that there has been a flagrant violation of the obligations established in resolution 1441 (2002).

The Secretary of State has also given us information on the links between Saddam Hussain's regime and terrorism. The international community cannot allow a country to acquire components, develop production lines, possess clandestine mobile production units and laboratories or acquire stocks of weapons of mass destruction. We cannot tolerate such a violation of international law, as it endangers international peace and security and undermines the very foundations of non-proliferation regimes that it has taken many decades to establish. Such a violation also jeopardizes the very existence of an international community that is able to organize peaceful coexistence in our global society.

There is only one explanation for the lack of cooperation by Saddam Hussain's regime with the work of verifying his programmes of weapons of mass destruction: that Saddam Hussain has not renounced his plan to use such weapons as he has undoubtedly used them in the past. As a Spaniard, I am particularly concerned that biological and chemical weapons still under Iraqi control, such as the ones shown to us today by Secretary of State Colin Powell, could end up in the hands of terrorists.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) have our full confidence and support. But inspections are not an end in themselves. Rather, they are the means of verifying that Iraq is carrying out effective and complete disarmament of its arsenal of weapons of mass destruction. Inspections will only bear fruit if Iraq cooperates actively. To date, it has not done so.

Time does not mean time for the inspectors. On the contrary, it means an ultimatum to Saddam Hussain's regime that it must disarm voluntarily. As Secretary of State Colin Powell said, the inspectors are not detectives. The inspectors should be the proxies for the international community in witnessing voluntary disarmament. We can consider all the mechanisms,

offices, additional inspections and minders we want. But the issue will still be the same: the lack of will on the part of Saddam Hussain's regime to fulfil its disarmament obligations. We will only be deceiving ourselves if we ignore that fact. Therefore, we can, and must, demand a change of political will: full cooperation with regard to disarmament, without delay or subterfuge. What is at stake is the credibility of the Security Council, which the Charter of the United Nations established as the most valuable instrument for the maintenance of peace. The Council is the key to our collective security.

However, for 12 years we have witnessed systematic non-compliance with Security Council resolutions by Saddam Hussain's regime. Spain therefore reiterates that it is imperative to send Saddam Hussain's regime an unequivocal message that non-compliance with the resolutions of the Council and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles pose a threat to peace and that, consequently, preserving international peace and security means, as the Council has underscored, the immediate and complete disarmament of Iraq.

A fundamental element of Spain's actions in the current Iraqi crisis is respect for international law, of which Security Council resolutions are an essential part. My Government believes that in spite of Iraq's continued non-compliance with its obligations — which has been made patently clear from the disturbing information just presented to us by Secretary of State Powell — there is still a chance for peace if Iraq radically modifies its lack of compliance.

Saddam Hussain's regime must understand that if it does not comply with its obligations, then it must confront the grave consequences called for in resolution 1441 (2002). But it should also understand that the full responsibility falls solely upon Saddam Hussain and his willingness to cooperate with the obligations imposed by the international community. That cooperation has heretofore been conspicuously absent. The international community urges him to take advantage of the last chance that has been given to him under resolution 1441 (2002). For the sake of peace in the world, I hope that Saddam Hussain's regime will not miss that opportunity.

The President: I now call on Her Excellency Mrs. Soledad Alvear Valenzuela, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile.

Mrs. Alvear Valenzuela (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, may I first of all congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February. At the same time, may I express our appreciation to France for the work accomplished in the presidency in January. I am also grateful for the timely convening of this important meeting. We express our appreciation to Secretary of State Colin Powell on his initiative. At the same time, I want to reiterate to the Secretary of State the condolences of the Chilean Government on the tragic accident of the space shuttle *Columbia*.

First of all, I want to express our concern at the grave information that we have just received. It points to a pattern of defiance and resistance on the part of Iraq with regard to fulfilling the demand contained in resolution 687 (1991) of 3 April 1991 — that is, its unconditional, immediate and verifiable disarmament. After more than 12 years of resolutions by this Council reiterating that demand, resolution 1441 (2002) gave Iraq, in terms that allow no double interpretation, a final opportunity to fulfil its disarmament obligations. We cannot, therefore, fail to express our dismay at the fact that the Iraqi regime — which has dragged its people into two bloody wars and has already impassively sat by while its people have suffered from prolonged sanctions — is now exposing those people to the risk of new and greater suffering.

My Government reiterates its conviction, as a fundamental point, that the Security Council's resolutions must be complied with fully. Attempts at partial compliance with the demands of an unequivocal text, at following a piecemeal approach in cooperating with the inspection process, at negotiating every piece of information as though this were a voluntary concession, or, worse yet, at attempting to watch over, deceive or thwart the process — all such attempts are violations of the resolution and open challenges to the international community.

It is our understanding that such an attitude derives from the totalitarian nature of an oppressive regime that has subjugated its people for decades and unjustly deprived them of access to opportunities appropriate to their proven wisdom and cultural richness. This is why, in his report on 27 January, Mr. Hans Blix affirmed that "Iraq appears not to have come to a genuine acceptance — not even today" of disarmament (S/PV.4692, p. 3).

My country has expressed the need to continue with the inspection process so that the inspections can, with the sense of urgency required under resolution 1441 (2002), arrive at conclusions that allow the Council to adopt appropriate measures at the proper time, in accordance with that urgency. Furthermore, we have stated that the inspections can impose their logic of peace only if a high degree of pressure is kept on the Iraqi regime regarding the consequences that it might suffer because of an attitude of sustained non-compliance with Council resolutions.

We believe that it is up to the Executive Chairman of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), in accordance with the provisions of operative paragraph 11 of resolution 1441 (2002),

"to report immediately to the Council any interference by Iraq with inspection activities, as well as any failure by Iraq to comply with its disarmament obligations, including its obligations regarding inspections under this resolution".

This Council's decision-making capacity will gain if the inspections immediately focus on the main unresolved disarmament issues. In this regard, it is indispensable to present Iraq with demands for action and information, demands that do not allow any delay or distortion whatsoever. That can define the course of the inspections and their viability.

In this regard, the accusations levelled a few moments ago by United States Secretary of State Colin Powell require urgent, precise clarification by Iraq. It is Chile's understanding that the Security Council, in exercising its responsibilities with regard to collective security, must use and promote the mechanisms of cooperation and multilateral consultation. For this reason, we support maintaining multilateral control of this crisis in the framework of the principles and purposes of the United Nations Charter, international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The adoption of resolution 1441 (2002) demonstrated the unity of which this body is capable. Therefore, we see the need to persevere in the effort to build a common position, which, in our opinion, would be the measure of the international community's success in achieving the objective of the disarmament of Iraq.

We are entering a crucial stage in a situation that involves many fears for the region and the stability of the world. As a peace-loving country, we must express our concern at the consequences of ending the diplomatic channels — consequences for the world, for the region and, in particular, for the security of the Iraqi civilian population, who have suffered so long from the effect of sanctions with a high human cost.

We cannot fail to reiterate that, as history often teaches us, more than the leaders, whose actions give rise to war, it is their peoples who suffer the direct consequences. If there is no radical change in Iraq's cooperation, this Council must use every means available in order to preserve the governing principles of international law.

Chile once again appeals to Iraq to consider its responsibility with regard to the main objective of this Organization and of those who make up this Council: the preservation of peace and international security.

The President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Georges Ribelo Chikoti, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola.

Mr. Chikoti (Angola): Since I am the first member of the Angolan Government to be on American soil since 1 February, allow me to express my condolences to the American Government and people on the disaster and loss of life sustained in the space shuttle *Colombia* accident that took place on that day.

Allow me also to congratulate you, Sir, in your capacity as President of the Council during this important meeting. We hope that, under your country's presidency, we will meet the enormous challenges facing us. I should like also to extend our thanks to France for the outstanding manner in which it conducted the Council's meetings during the month of January.

It is, at this crucial moment, important for me and for my Government to recognize the important initiative taken last week by President George Bush to send Secretary of State Colin Powell to share with us today the compelling intelligence information of which we have just been apprised.

The question of Iraq has for 20 years been at the centre of the concerns of the international community. In the 1980s, Angola expressed concern at the war waged against Iran, and later joined in the universal

condemnation of the invasion of Kuwait and took part in the joint action by the Security Council and the international community against Iraq's armament programme. We all know — and it is our conviction — that, had its goals been reached, it would have led to a global catastrophe of unimaginable consequences.

This gathering therefore constitutes a particularly important moment in this joint action. Reports and clarifications were provided to the Council by weapons inspectors a few days ago, and earlier today we received supplementary information from the United States Administration through Secretary Powell concerning the situation in Iraq.

We welcome the fact that this information was presented directly to the Security Council through the respected and authoritative voice of Secretary Powell. We deem this development to be a very significant contribution that will surely enable the Security Council to take the important decisions which the world expects with an even greater sense of responsibility and of purpose.

The pertinent information presented by Secretary of State Colin Powell adds new elements which should make clear the importance of continuing to monitor the situation and of being prepared to take a position within the framework of the Security Council.

The provisions contained in resolution 1441 (2002), in particular in operative paragraph 10, request Member States to give full support to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the discharge of their mandates, including by providing any information related to prohibited programmes or other aspects of their mandates; we have just seen an example of this.

Following the presentation of the reports of UNMOVIC and the IAEA, we expressed our appreciation — which we reiterate today — to Mr. Blix and to Mr. ElBaradei, as well to the inspection teams in Iraq, for their efforts and commitment in the discharge of the important mandate entrusted to them by the Council.

My delegation recognized, as did the inspectors, the cooperation of Iraq in providing the necessary assistance for the establishment of the inspections infrastructure, whose importance should not be minimized. However, we expect and strongly urge Iraq

to do much more. Iraq's substantive cooperation with inspections is an obligation under the terms of resolution 1441 (2002). Only through such cooperation can Iraq prove beyond any doubt that it is ready to embark on a programme for the elimination of its missile, chemical and biological weapons.

The Security Council needs a clear and unambiguous answer from Iraq to the outstanding questions raised by the inspectors.

It is our assessment that the strengthening of the inspections and the enlargement of their scope is an important development and an additional opportunity to enhance their efficiency. The inspections — if they enjoy the full political support of the Security Council and of the international community, and if adequate time is allowed for thoughtful action — can be a powerful tool in our common endeavour to meet the objective of disarming Iraq, averting war and reinforcing international peace and security.

The overall picture of the situation, in our view, makes clear the need for the continuation of the inspections programme. In this respect, we urge Iraq, the United Nations inspectors and those countries with the means to do so to pursue their efforts urgently and in a more aggressive and cooperative way, so that information can be obtained that is conducive to an accurate identification of weapons of mass destruction and their elimination, in accordance with the pertinent Security Council resolutions.

In this context, it is relevant to call the attention of the world to the example set by the African countries, which, through the Pelindaba agreement, decided to free the continent of weapons of mass destruction.

We deem it essential for the Security Council, in order to preserve peace, to maintain its unity and to continue to extend its political support to the inspections. This must be done with determination and perseverance, in order to attain the goals set by the international community with respect to Iraq.

The question of Iraq poses a real threat to international peace and security. However, we still believe that a peaceful solution can be found. My country, Angola, is living testimony of the disastrous consequences of war. More than 2 million people died. There are 4 million internally displaced persons, more than 80,000 persons mutilated, more than 100,000

orphans, and a total and unimaginable destruction of the physical infrastructure. That reality, so vividly present in our minds, leads us to ponder the severe consequences of a war.

Directly concerning the subject matter under consideration today, I would like to refer to the pertinent paragraph of the declaration just adopted by the summit meeting of the African Union Central Organ, held in Addis Ababa, affirming that

"a military confrontation in Iraq would be a destabilizing factor for the whole region and would have far-reaching economic and security consequences for all the countries of the world and, particularly, for those of Africa [and the Middle East]."

My delegation therefore thinks that we should persevere on the road towards a peaceful resolution of the question of Iraq. War would demonstrate a failure of our multilateral system based on respect for the United Nations Charter by all nations.

The option we support is to follow the path that allows an effective role for the Security Council within the framework of a multilateral approach to the question of peacefully disarming Iraq. We believe that at the present stage we have not exhausted all the options before we accept the inevitability of a war.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to extend our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of the United States of America following the tragic disaster that befell the space shuttle *Columbia*.

It is my privilege to read out the text of a statement by Mr. Farouk Al-Shara', Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic. It was impossible for him to participate in person in our important deliberations.

"It gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of February. I express my confidence that your presiding over our deliberations will lead us to a just settlement of the issues on our agenda and, in particular, a peaceful settlement to the question of Iraq based on the implementation of Council resolution 1441 (2002), which is our common objective.

"It is also my pleasure to thank France, a friend of Syria, for successfully presiding over the Council's deliberations last month. We thank France for its efforts, in more than one place in the world, to favour peace over war.

"We listened attentively to the information and opinions presented by Mr. Colin Powell, Secretary of State of the United States of America. Since time does not permit me to discuss the content of the statement, we believe that the way to ascertain the facts and to reach a conclusion with respect to irrefutable evidence is to transmit such information to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We urge all Member States that have accurate information on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction to submit such information to the inspectors so that they can assess its accuracy and inform the Council accordingly. We hope that they will not be inundated with information or opinions that do not stand up to the facts in order not to confuse them or distract them from the tasks entrusted to them by the Council.

"The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1441 (2002). It is no secret that Syria joined the consensus on that resolution after receiving guarantees and clarifications from permanent members of the Council that voting in favour of the resolution meant proceeding seriously towards a peaceful resolution regarding Iraq's disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction and that the resolution was not a pretext for waging war against Iraq. The fact that some members of the Council speak about the need to adopt a second resolution is, in our view, further confirmation of those clarifications and guarantees.

"Nevertheless, two months after the adoption of the resolution and the resumption of inspections, which have made reasonable progress and have not yet met with any insurmountable obstacles, our region is at a grave crossroads, teetering between peace and war. Thinking that war is one of the options before the Council is in itself proof of our collective failure to peacefully implement resolution 1441 (2002). We believe that the Council can still make great

efforts to reach a peaceful solution to the question of Iraq compatible with the Security Council's mandate to maintain international peace and security.

"Syria believes that the existence of the option of war is proof not only of the Council's failure to fulfil its duties but also of the failure of the international system, which at this stage should rely more than ever on the Charter of the United Nations as an indispensable point of reference in ensuring that peace prevails all over the world.

"Syria still believes in the possibility of arriving at a peaceful settlement that spares Iraq war and spares the region the dangerous repercussions of such a war. Such a settlement would guarantee the implementation of resolution 1441 (2002); it would save the lives of thousands of potential innocent victims in Iraq, as well as those of the soldiers who have crossed continents, bringing them safely back to their families.

"Our commitment to peace is compatible with the approach of the Security Council, which in December 2002 adopted a presidential statement on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PRST/2002/41) and a few days ago adopted a resolution on the protection of children in armed conflicts (resolution 1460 (2003)). At a time when our Council is adopting one statement after another to save innocent people in many parts of the world, it is truly odd that we can discuss going to war against Iraq, which no longer occupies the territories of others or threatens its neighbours, and at a time when Israel still occupies Palestinian, Lebanese and Syrian territories in violation of the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations and periodically threatens its neighbours.

"Syria has been kept informed of the work of the inspectors and of Iraqi cooperation with those inspectors. Those who believe that inspections in any part of the world can be free of occasional problems and obstacles are completely mistaken. Nevertheless, after listening to the reports of Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei, we ask whether the obstacles to which they referred are insurmountable. Do they truly warrant a destructive war against Iraq? This is an important

question. Through statements by its senior officials, Iraq has expressed its readiness to continue to cooperate, to enhance cooperation and to make extra efforts to find acceptable solutions for existing problems in order to ensure that the inspectors can carry out their tasks as established by the Security Council.

"That requires that both parties — Iraq and the inspectors — build a common denominator of trust based on Iraq's cooperation with the inspectors, so that they can carry out their task as soon as possible, on the understanding that that will be in the interests of all concerned parties. In return, the inspectors' pursuit of their work, objectively and in a way that respects the sensitivities of the Iraqi people, would definitely build trust between the two parties, which is a desired goal.

"Therefore, Syria calls upon the Security Council to continue to support the work of the inspectors and to give them sufficient time to carry out their task. Syria emphasizes Iraq's commitment to continue to cooperate actively with the inspectors and to provide everything required under resolution 1441 (2002). In parallel, the Council must take necessary measures to lift the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people under paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991) and must activate paragraph 14 of that resolution, which calls for the declaration of the Middle East as a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, bacteriological and chemical — without excepting any State, including Israel, which alone has acquired all of those lethal weapons.

"Syria has made strenuous efforts, and has engaged in regional and international contacts at the highest level, so that we can arrive at a peaceful solution to the Iraqi question, based on implementation of resolution 1441 (2002). Syria has also worked with Iraq's neighbouring countries, which have expressed readiness to cooperate with the Council in efforts to arrive at a peaceful settlement of the Iraqi question. The deliberations held in Istanbul proved that Iraq does not constitute a threat to its neighbours. The message of Iraq's neighbours to the world was "no" to war and "yes" to peaceful solutions based on the implementation of Security Council

resolutions. That message is extremely significant, because it comes from a region that has suffered under the scourge of many wars and that is still suffering from the continued policy of occupation and destruction against the defenceless Palestinian people, its property and its legitimate rights.

"The world's peoples look forward to our deliberations, hoping for a peaceful settlement to the Iraqi question — a settlement that will save the lives of thousands of Iraqis and other people should the military option, outside the framework of international legitimacy, be exercised. Let us all work for peace, because we can attain peace if we have the good faith, the determination and the political will to do so. Those elements are to be found in most members of the Council, which was entrusted by the Charter with maintaining international peace and security. That is what Syria and the other Arab countries are trying to bring about, and it is what we hope the Council and the rest of the international community will also work towards."

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Mr. President, I should like to convey to you the apologies of your Guinean colleague, Foreign Minister François Fall, who, for reasons beyond his control, was unable to take part in this important meeting. I should also like, on behalf of the Government and the people of Guinea, to reiterate our sincere condolences to the Government and the people of the United States and to the families of the victims of the tragic accident that befell the space shuttle *Columbia* on 1 February 2003. In addition, I should like to wish a warm welcome to you, Mr. President, and to reiterate my delegation's sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. You may be assured of our full cooperation.

To France, I wish to reaffirm my delegation's appreciation of the outstanding way in which it conducted the Council's activities last month. I should also like to welcome the presence among us of the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and of the other important personalities around this table.

The organization of this meeting on the situation of Iraq — the fifth gathering in 10 days — rightly attests to that question's importance for the Council. My country is grateful to the Government of the United

States for its initiative to share with the States Members of the Organization intelligence and other information concerning Iraq's weapons programmes. My delegation takes note of the important statement just made by the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Colin Powell. It will make an immediate report to the competent authorities with a view to a proper evaluation.

We continue to hope that other States will follow the lead of the United States by making available to the inspectors any information that they might have. That is one of the recommendations of resolution 1441 (2002), which, if it had been fully implemented, would have already allowed the inspectors to make more progress on the ground and thus to advance towards their goal.

On 27 January, my delegation followed with attention and interest the presentation by Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei of their progress report on the inspections. My delegation's examination of that report enabled us to make certain observations, some of which should be recalled. From the point of view of procedure and form, progress has been made. After two months of work on the ground, we note that, thanks to the cooperation of the Iraqi authorities, the inspectors had easy access to more than 200 sites, including presidential sites and private residences. That also aided in the establishment of infrastructure that the inspectors need to carry out their tasks, including by facilitating the establishment of offices in Baghdad and in Mosul. That enabled the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to make a partial evaluation of the Iraqi arsenal, four years after the departure of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM).

With regard to substantive questions, there is still a way to go. Indeed, many questions remain in the biological, chemical and ballistic areas. In particular, it is important to state that, according to the inspectors themselves, the Iraqi declaration of 7 December 2002 is inadequate, because it merely repeats information earlier transmitted to UNSCOM, contains little that is new, and is of marginal use. The interviews of scientists are not taking place to the satisfaction of the inspectors. The U-2 planes cannot carry out reconnaissance flights. In brief, the inspectors have confronted a series of difficulties in their work.

In the light of those elements, we must state that Iraqi cooperation has been much more forthcoming on questions of procedure than on those of substance. That is why we appeal unequivocally to Iraq to abide scrupulously by its obligations under the provisions of resolution 1441 (2002). It must resolve to move from passive to active cooperation with the inspectors and to realize that frank and more determined cooperation remains the key to a peaceful solution to the crisis.

More specifically, the Baghdad authorities must give precise responses to the many questions that are still pending — for example, by providing convincing evidence of the unilateral destruction of certain biological and chemical weapons; by encouraging scientists and experts who took part in weapons programmes to submit to private interviews, according to the modalities set forth in resolution 1441 (2002); by providing, without delay, an updated, credible list of all scientists associated with weapons programmes; and, finally, by authorizing reconnaissance flights by U-2 planes.

Furthermore, while the promise of better cooperation that was made on 20 January is encouraging, the Iraqi authorities must translate it into concrete, verifiable and sustained action, because the international community, having learned from the procrastination of the past, cannot be satisfied by mere words. Moreover, my delegation believes that the possibility of the suspension and lifting of sanctions should encourage Iraq to cooperate with the inspectors in order to alleviate the ordeal and suffering of its people.

The existence of many grey areas, on the one hand, and the relative progress made on the ground, on the other, prompt my delegation to state that the inspections must go on. To that end, my delegation urges UNMOVIC and IAEA to pursue their efforts to explore every avenue opened by the inspections and to fulfil the goal of their mission. In providing them with a clear and strengthened mandate, resolution 1441 (2002) also gave them the means to succeed in that mission.

My country, Guinea, has always favoured the peaceful settlement of crises and of the Iraqi crisis in particular. I feel compelled to restate that position, because my delegation believes that there is still a chance for a peaceful settlement and that we must seize it. We reiterate our full confidence in and full support

for Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei, as well as for their respective teams, and remain convinced that they will continue to act with unflagging rigor and professionalism in the fulfilment of their mandate.

In conclusion, we are now at a crucial moment for the maintenance of international peace and security, the foundation of our shared Organization. We must cherish that imperative and strive together in unity to build a world of peace and cooperation.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Vice-Chancellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

Allow me to express my sincere condolences on the tragic loss of life in the accident of the *Columbia* space shuttle to the families and to the Governments and peoples of the United States and Israel.

I would like to thank Secretary of State Colin Powell for the information he has just given us. The place and timing of this detailed account underline once more that the Security Council is and remains the centre of decision-making on the Iraq crisis. Germany supports this approach. Given the implications they could have for future decisions, the findings have to be examined carefully. We can already see that they coincide in part with information that we also have. They are based on a close exchange of information.

It is now decisive that the United Nations inspectors also be provided with this extensive material, insofar as that has not yet happened. They have to work with this information to be able to clarify the unresolved questions quickly and fully. And Iraq has to answer the elements which were provided today by our colleague Colin Powell to the Security Council. The more expert information the inspection teams have at their disposal, the more targeted their work can be. Thus, from the outset, Germany, too, has passed on the information to Hans Blix, Mohamed ElBaradei and their teams.

The Security Council has been dealing with Iraq for 12 years. As a matter of principle, the unity of the Council is of central importance in this context. Baghdad has time and again violated the obligations laid down in the relevant Council resolutions. Nor do we hold any illusions on the inhumane and brutal nature of Saddam Hussain's dictatorship. Under his rule, Iraq has attacked its neighbours Kuwait and Iran, fired missiles at Israel and deployed poison gas against

Iran and its own Kurdish population. The regime is terrible for the Iraqi people. That is why a policy of containment, sanctions and effective military control of the no-fly zones has been implemented since the Gulf War. Iraq must comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions in their entirety and completely disarm its weapons of mass destruction potential.

The presence of the inspectors in Iraq has already effectively reduced the danger of that potential. Nevertheless, the aim of resolution 1441 (2002) is the full and lasting disarmament of Iraq. In his latest report, Hans Blix listed many open questions. The regime in Baghdad must give clear answers to all these concrete questions without delay.

Despite all the difficulties, United Nations efforts to disarm Iraq in the past were not without success. In the 1990s, the inspectors were able to destroy more weapons of mass destruction capacities than did the Gulf War. The threat potential of Iraq to the region was thus clearly reduced. The current basis for the inspections is laid down in resolutions 1284 (1999) and 1441 (2002). The weapons inspectors from the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have powers that reach further than ever before. They have to be given a real chance and the time they need to fully exhaust the possibilities.

Chief Inspector Blix and IAEA head ElBaradei will travel to Iraq again next weekend and thereafter update us. The success of that trip will be of paramount importance. It will depend crucially on the full cooperation of Baghdad. Quite a few States suspect that Saddam Hussain's regime is withholding relevant information and concealing military capabilities. This strong suspicion has to be dispelled beyond any doubt. That is exactly why resolution 1441 (2002) provides for the instrument of inspections in Iraq by UNMOVIC and the IAEA.

The dangers of a military action and its consequences are plain to see. Precisely because of the effectiveness of the work of the inspectors, we must continue to seek a peaceful solution to the crisis.

In the world of the twenty-first century, the United Nations is key to conflict prevention, crisis management and peace building. On the basis of resolution 1441 (2002) and in the light of practical experience, we need to enhance the instruments of

inspection and control. We need a tough regime of intensive inspections that can guarantee the full and lasting disarmament of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. By tightening inspections, we are creating an opportunity for a peaceful solution. Such a tough system of inspections could also be effectively applied by the Security Council in other cases. Our French colleague made some very interesting proposals on this matter which deserve our further consideration.

Moreover, we ought to support all endeavours of States in the region that are currently engaging in considerable diplomatic efforts to bring the Iraqi Government to fully implement the resolutions. Iraq has to disarm openly, peacefully and in cooperation with the inspectors without any delay.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Aldouri (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. We wish you success in your work amid these extraordinarily difficult international circumstances.

We should have liked to have been granted sufficient time, commensurate with the gravity of the statement made by the United States Secretary of State in his presentation, and not just a few minutes to rebut a statement that lasted 90 minutes. Nevertheless, Iraq will provide detailed and technical explanatory answers to the allegations made in that statement. I shall be polite and brief.

The pronouncements in Mr. Powell's statement on weapons of mass destruction are utterly unrelated to the truth and the reality on the ground. No new information was provided; mere sound recordings cannot be confirmed as genuine. Council members may have seen me smile when I heard some of those recordings; they contain certain words that I will not attempt to translate here. However, those incorrect allegations, unnamed and unknown sources, schemes and presumptions are all in line with United States policy, which is directed towards one known objective.

In the interview that he granted yesterday to former British Minister Tony Benn, President Saddam Hussain reiterated that Iraq is completely free from weapons of mass destruction — a statement repeated by numerous Iraqi officials for more than a decade.

Mr. Powell could have spared himself, his team and the Security Council a great deal of effort by presenting those allegations directly to the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 10 of Security Council resolution 1441 (2002). He could have left the inspectors to work in peace and quiet, to investigate without media pressure. At any rate, the forthcoming visit of Mr. Blix and Mr. ElBaradei on 8 and 9 February will provide another opportunity to test the validity of those allegations. Ongoing inspections have shown that previous allegations and reports from the United States and Britain were false.

Iraq submitted an accurate, comprehensive and updated 12,000-page declaration that included detailed information about previous Iraqi programmes, as well as updated information about Iraqi industries in various fields.

The inspectors began their activities intensively in Iraq on 27 November 2002, with more than 250 UNMOVIC and IAEA staff, including more than 100 inspectors. As of 4 February 2003, the inspection teams had conducted 575 inspections throughout Iraq, covering 321 sites. The sites singled out by President Bush on 12 September 2002 and by British Prime Minister Tony Blair in the same month, as well as in the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) report of October 2002, were at the top of the list of sites inspected by the inspection teams. Inspectors discovered that none of the allegations contained in those reports was true. Thus, the truth and accuracy of Iraq's declaration that it was free from weapons of mass destruction have been documented by the two technical agencies entrusted by the Security Council with undertaking that task.

It is well known that inspection teams took samples of water, soil, plants, air and factory and production remnants from vast areas, including cities, villages, highways, farms, factories and universities throughout Iraq — north, south, east and west. UNMOVIC and IAEA analyses of those samples concluded that there was no indication of proscribed chemical, biological or radiological agents or, indeed, of any other proscribed activities in any part of Iraq.

Mr. Blix confirmed in his statement to *The New York Times* on 30 January 2003 that the inspections did

not support any of the scenarios alleged by Mr. Colin Powell — that Iraqi officials were moving proscribed material within or out of Iraq with the goal of concealing it. He confirmed that he did not find sufficient reason to believe that Iraq was sending scientists out of Iraq to prevent them from being interviewed and that he had no reason to believe that President Bush was correct in saying in his State of the Union address that Iraqi intelligence agents were posing as scientists for the interviews. We would like to reiterate that Iraq encourages its scientists to submit to interviews requested by UNMOVIC and the IAEA.

As for the existence of the mobile laboratories alleged by Secretary Powell this morning, just yesterday Mr. Blix stated that to date UNMOVIC had found no proof of the presence of such mobile units.

As regards the U-2 overflights and the controversy that has developed in that connection, Iraq does not object to such flights for the purpose of conducting inspection activities. Rather, the objection is that United States and British warplanes are imposing illegal no-fly zones, contrary to Security Council resolutions. To overcome that obstacle, it would be enough for such warplanes to suspend their flights during U-2 flights. Iraq cannot be held responsible for those flights.

The allegation that trucks leave sites prior to the arrival of inspection teams is false. Inspections occur suddenly, without prior notification to the Iraqi side. Furthermore, UNMOVIC and the IAEA have their own sources that provide satellite imagery, and they also use helicopters for surveillance and inspection activities. We therefore believe that those two agencies are very well informed about what takes place on the ground in Iraq. It is important to remind the Council that weapons of mass destruction programmes are not like an aspirin pill — something that can be easily hidden. Rather, they require huge production facilities for research and development, weaponization and deployment. Such facilities cannot be concealed. Inspectors have criss-crossed all of Iraq and found no evidence of that.

As regards the sound recordings, suffice it to say that scientific and technical progress has reached a level that would allow for the fabrication of such allegations and for their presentation in the way that Mr. Powell presented them. Anyone can be recorded, at any time and anywhere in the world.

As for the supposed relationship between Iraq and the Al Qaeda organization, I would like to note what President Saddam Hussain has said:

"If we had a relationship with Al Qaeda and we believed in that relationship, we would not be ashamed to admit it. We have no relationship with Al Qaeda".

I would like now to refer to a recent statement by a United States official as reported in *The New York Times* three days ago. He stated that analysts at the CIA have complained that Administration officials have exaggerated reports on weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, and particularly on Iraq's presumed relationship with Al Qaeda, in order to bolster their case for war.

I would like to add that Mr. Jack Straw has ignored intelligence reports from his own Government stating that there is no relationship between Iraq and Al Qaeda.

Mr. Powell's assertion that Iraq used chemical weapons against its own people particularly surprised me, given that a CIA official unmasked the truth on 31 January — just a few days ago — in *The New York Times*. He stated that the United States Administration has known since 1988 that Iraq did not use chemical weapons against its own people for one simple reason: it does not have the chemical weapon that was used in the Halabja incident.

In conclusion, I want to say that the obvious goal behind the holding of this meeting and the presentation of false allegations by the Secretary of State of the United States was to sell the idea of war and aggression against my country, Iraq, without providing any legal, moral or political justification. This was primarily an attempt to sway United States public opinion — and world public opinion generally — in favour of launching a hostile attack against Iraq.

In return, Iraq offers security and peace and reiterates before the members of the Security Council our commitment to continue our proactive cooperation with the inspection teams in order to make it possible for them to complete their tasks as soon as possible so as to verify that Iraq is free of weapons of mass destruction, lift the unjust sanctions imposed against us, ensure respect for our national security and guarantee regional security by ridding the whole Middle East of weapons of mass destruction, including Israel's huge arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991).

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Before adjourning, may I remind Council members of the luncheon that my delegation will have the pleasure of hosting in the Delegates' Dining Room.

The meeting rose at 2.10 p.m.